# Supporting EBSA in the Jewish Community




## A Supplementary Leaflet to the Barnet EBSA Guidance

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## Main Guidance information

This document is designed to be read in addition to the Barnet EBSA Guidance for Children and Families linked here: Barnet EBSA Guidance for Schools Families and Professionals. The main guidance covers:

- Terminology, prevalence and rationale
- EBSA Risk and Resilience Factors
- Professional services who can offer support for EBSA
- The importance of whole school systems for supporting EBSA
- Early Intervention
- Transition Support
- Long-term/entrenched EBSA
- Signposting to helpful resources
- Glossary of terms and acronyms

This leaflet explores risk and resilience factors for EBSA that are particularly relevant for Children and Young People (CYP) attending Jewish Schools which may be additional to those covered in the original Barnet EBSA Guidance.

## Contributors

This guidance was developed by the Supporting EBSA in the Jewish Community Task and Finish Group listed below. This group also facilitated a research project which gathered the views of the wider Jewish Community in Barnet which has contributed to this guidance. Thank you to the families and professionals who took the time to share their views.

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**Rationale**

Jewish Community organisation, Partnership for Jewish Schools (PaJeS), reached out to (BELS) and expressed concern around the accessibility of EBSA support for the Jewish Community. This was reflected in the low uptake from Jewish Secondary Schools in the EBSA Project which began in Barnet in 2024. Representatives from BPCF also felt that it would be helpful to have bespoke guidance for Jewish schools and families which acknowledged the risk and resilience factors specific to the Jewish community. Through community-based research, we developed an understanding of these factors. A practical implication of this research is to share it with families and professionals who support children experiencing EBSA, so they are best equipped to do so. This supplementary leaflet aims to summarise those research findings in a useful, practical way. This research will also inform the EBSA Project in Barnet going forward.

# Risk and Resilience Factors Specific to the Jewish Community

Schools should be mindful of these possible risk factors for EBSA and the impact they may have when supporting a young person experiencing EBSA.

## 1. Antisemitism and Conflict involving Israel

**Potential Risk Factors:**

Many families will have anxieties relating to the ongoing conflict involving Israel and the recent rise in antisemitism.

- CYP may be worried about friends and family in Israel.
- Parents/Carers may be feeling protective over their CYP.
- Many occurrences of antisemitism happen on the journey to and from school.
- CYP may be anxious about wearing their school uniform as it makes them identifiable to others.
- Families and CYP may be anxious about schools being a potential target for antisemitic attacks.

**Recommendations:**

- Schools should address bullying using the schools anti-bullying policy and consider using restorative practices.
- Schools should consult the Guidance for school staff in the context of racism, Islamophobia/anti-Muslim hate and antisemitism and Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online - a guide for schools.pdf



## 2. Understanding and Acceptance of SEN and SEMH Needs

**Potential Risk Factors:**

Masking/shielding can be even more prominent in the Jewish community due to values held highly in the community including being giving, kind and achieving academic success. This is when someone masks/shields their internal emotional distress at school or other social situations.

**Recommendations:**

- It is important that young people experiencing EBSA have a safe space to demask, express how they are truly feeling and to regulate in a way that suits them best at school and home.
- It is crucial that the CYP's voice is sought when supporting EBSA so those supporting them have a full picture of their strengths and needs. Please refer to the *Gaining Views of the Children/Young People* section of the EBSA Guidance.
- If schools feel that there is a lack of understanding around EBSA in their school, they can seek EBSA support through the EBSA Project in Barnet, which is currently being funded through the Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS). They can speak to their link Educational Psychologist about how to access this support. For more information on how educational psychologists can support follow this link: Barnet Local Offer :: Home / Info and Advice / How to get help / How specialist education services can help / Educational psychology .



## 3. Being of Minority Orientations or Identities

**Recommendations:**

- It's important that all CYP have a trusted adult at home and school who they feel understands them and values them for who they are.
- Keshet UK is a Jewish charity that provides education and training to schools and other organisations in the Jewish Community with the aim of improving wellbeing for LGBT+ people and their families. More information including useful links can be found here: HOME | KeshetUK
- Noa specialises in providing a culturally sensitive service to the Orthodox Jewish community in order that Orthodox girls can access support from someone who understands their cultural background.

## 4. Religious Holidays e.g. Purim, Hannukah.

**Potential Risk Factors:**

These celebrations can be times of joy and connection. For those with SEN and SEMH needs, they can also come with high sensory and social demands (e.g. crowds and loud noises) which can be dysregulating, overwhelming and draining. It's important to

be mindful of making these celebrations a time that all can enjoy, and/or opt out of if needed. Below are some suggestions for making celebrations more inclusive.

**Recommendations:**

- Be proactive by teaching and practicing emotion regulation techniques at home and in the classroom. Some examples of these can be found at this link: Self-Care Resources For Young People | Anna Freud
- Preparing CYP for changes in timetables and routine in advance.
- Allowing use of ear defenders.
- Having a designated quiet, safe space that is not impacted by the celebration.
- Flexibility around wearing costumes and masks and encouraging those who may find this difficult to wear what they are most comfortable in.
- Religious rules around food can be difficult for CYP with sensory processing differences, including selective food preferences. Allow for flexibility and actively reduce the stigma around not fasting and not eating festival specific foods and supporting those who opt out. For example, providing a designated private space for them to eat.



- There can also be additional financial and social pressures around these times which can cause anxiety to CYP and their family. For example, comparing presents at Hannukah, being invited to different celebrations and expectations to be charitable around these times.
- Listen to each individual CYP's voice and collaborate with them when considering how to support them through these celebrations.

## 5. Bar/Bat Mitzvahs

**Resilience Factor**

Bar/Bat Mitzvahs can be very exciting and joyous times for families. It is an opportunity for family and community to come together to support their CYP as they begin their journey into adulthood.

**Potential Risk Factors**

- These celebrations also have high sensory and social demands.

- As celebrations are often held on a Sunday, they can impact a CYP's energy levels for the school week.
- They can highlight peer difficulties and social exclusion.
- They can put financial pressure on families.

**Recommendation**

Please refer to the recommendations in point 4) above on how to make these celebrations more inclusive.

## 6. Clothing specific to Jewish Customs

**Potential Risk Factors:**

- This can be uncomfortable and distracting for those with sensory processing differences.
- This can also contribute to financial expectations which can add to anxiety in the family.

**Recommendations**

It is important to allow flexibility around clothing and encourage CYP to wear what they are most comfortable in.

## 7. Close-Knit Community

**Resilience Factor**

Community is a strong traditional value in the Jewish Community. This can be a resilience factor for EBSA relating to sense of belonging and social support.



**Potential Risk Factor:**

In close communities it can be difficult to keep things private, and this can cause anxiety for some families. It is helpful to be aware of this.

## 8. Compulsory Jewish Studies

**Resilience Factor**

These provide additional understanding of culture, history and religion.

**Potential Risk Factor**

They can also add to academic pressure for CYP.

**Recommendation**

Consult with the CYP about what subjects they enjoy and feel anxious about. It could be helpful to do a RAG Rated Timetable as explained in the EBSA guidance. This can inform allowing flexibility around engagement with certain subjects and adapted/reduced timetables if needed.

## 9. Online Safety and Religious Restrictions on Technology

**Resilience Factor**

Religious restrictions on technology can be both a risk and resilience factor. Spending less time on screens and social media can benefit mental health in that CYP are encouraged to gain fulfilment in other more tangible ways.



**Potential Risk Factor**

CYP are less connected to their peers which can contribute to them becoming disconnected from their school life if experiencing EBSA.

**Recommendation:**

Online safety is a relevant factor for all CYP. Please see the ISPCC Safer internet Campaign for videos and articles on how to support your CYP be safe online: Who are our children talking to online, asks ISPCC as it launches new campaign ahead of Safer Internet Day 2024. - ISPCC

***This list of risk and resilience factors is not exhaustive, and it is important to gather the view of the young person and family when planning how to best support. These should also be considered alongside the Barnet EBSA Guidance.***

## Support Specific to Jewish Communities

There are many charities and support networks for schools and families that are unique to the Jewish Community. Below is a table of these services, how they can support and how you can reach them.

| Service | Contact | Type of Support |
|---|---|---|
| **Chai** | **Free confidential helpline:** 08088084567<br><br>**Email**: info@chaicancercare.org<br><br>**Postal Address:**<br>Chai Cancer Care<br>142-146 Great North Way<br>London<br>NW4 1EH<br><br>**Website**: Chai Cancer Care – Together we can cope | Chai Cancer Care is the Jewish community's national cancer support organisation, enabling patients, family and friends to manage the impact of a cancer diagnosis. They provide expert physical, emotional and practical support delivered with care and sensitivity, and in complete confidence. |
| **Gateways** | **Website: About Gateways - Gateways**<br><br>**Email:** info@gateways.org.uk<br>**Phone**: 020 8183 0164<br><br>**Adress**: Edgeworth Close, London, NW4 4HJ. | Gateways is an alternative education provider and offers bespoke teaching for each student.<br><br>Students attending Gateways are ages 14+, they struggle to remain in mainstream school, due to poor mental health, critical illnesses and social and emotion challenges, preventing them from accessing the education they deserve. |
| **JAMI** | **Website**: Jami is the mental health service for the Jewish community - Jami UK | Jami enriches and saves lives impacted by mental illness in the Jewish community. |

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| | **Phone**: Call us on 020 8458 2223 and press 1 (Our duty worker will call back within 5 working days)<br><br>**Referral Form**: Make a referral - Jami UK<br><br>**Address**:<br>Jami<br>Amelie House<br>The Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Campus,<br>221 Golders Green Road<br>London, NW11 9DQ | They support with navigating mental health services, provide emotional support and expert advice, provide treatment for mental health needs and deliver education and training around supporting mental health. |
| **Jteen** | **Website**: Support - JTeen<br><br>**Office Phone**: 0208 079 1165<br><br>**Email**: admin@jteen.co.uk<br><br>**Support Line - Phone**:<br>0800 915 4646<br><br>**Support Line - Text:**<br>07860 058 823<br><br>**Message Online:** Contact - JTeen | JTeen Support is an emotional health helpline for Jewish teens, available via text, phone, or WhatsApp from 6 PM – midnight.<br><br>Listen to their podcast: Podcast - JTeen |
| **Jewish Family Centre** | **Website: JFC – Supporting families through stormy times**<br><br>**Email:** info@ljfc.com<br><br>**Address:**<br>2a St George's Rd<br>London NW11 0LR<br><br>**Phone:** 020 8209 1117<br><br>**Opening hours**<br><br>Monday to Thursday<br>9.30am – 4.30pm | Provide a culturally appropriate space for families in the Jewish community to access a wide range of services, from family support, therapy, and parenting coaching to breakfast clubs and skilled-based activities. They offer counselling services and advocacy signposting and provide contact and handover supervision for the most vulnerable families in our community. |

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| **Keshet UK** | **Contact Form**: CONTACT US \| KeshetUK<br><br>**Website: HOME \| KeshetUK** | KeshetUK is the UK's Jewish LGBT+ education and training charity. Their mission is to ensure that LGBT+ Jews and their families are included throughout Jewish life in the UK. They work across all parts of the UK Jewish community. In addition to running training sessions for school staff and workshops for parents, KeshetUK staff are also able to have quiet conversations in the strictest confidence if an adult wants advice around supporting an LGBT+ child's wellbeing.. |
| **Noa Girls** | **Website: Home - Noa Girls**<br><br>**General Enquiries:**<br>020 8731 7025<br>**info@noagirls.com**<br><br>**For NW London referrals:**<br>07551 595 302<br>**referrals@noagirls.com**<br><br>**For Stamford Hill referrals:**<br>07543 501 577<br>**SHreferrals@noagirls.com**<br><br>**For Eating Disorder referrals email**<br>**EDreferrals@noagirls.com**<br><br>**Social Media:** @noagirls | Noa offers wraparound and wide ranging support , delivered though a clinical team of therapists, keyworkers ,mentors and dietitians to adolescent girls in the Orthodox Jewish Community. They offer a range of specialist programmes including Eating Disorders and EBSA. They empower each girl to harness her innate strength to move forward and overcome obstacles. Education and training in mental health is also provided in the community. |
| **Norwood** | **Website**: About Norwood \| Norwood \| Supporting Neurodiverse People<br><br>**Address**: | Norwood provides practical, emotional and therapeutic support to children and families who are facing challenges. This includes families impacted by learning disabilities, autism, special |

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| | Broadway House,<br>80-82 The Broadway,<br>Stanmore HA7 4HB<br><br>**Phone**: 020 8809 8809<br>**Email**: info@norwood.org.uk | educational needs and emotional issues. |
| **PaJeS** | **Website**: PaJeS \| Home<br><br>**Address**: Bet Meir, 44a Albert Road, London, NW4 2SJ<br><br>**Phone: 020 3869 3917**<br>**Email: office@pajes.org.uk** | Provide services, support and strategy to Jewish schools primarily throughout the UK. From professional development and strategic thinking to public affairs and wellbeing initiatives, their holistic approach fosters an environment where growth and innovation are celebrated. |
| **Synagogues and Rabbis** | Directory for Synagogues in Barnet: Local Places of Worship - Synagogues Barnet Borough | Synagogues can be sources of social support. They promote community and sense of belonging. |