

## Senior Rabbi of Lauderdale Road Synagogue & Spiritual Head of the S&P Sephardi Community (London, United Kingdom)

### Job Description and Person Specification

#### Introduction

The Spanish and Portuguese Sephardi Community is the oldest established Orthodox congregation in the United Kingdom, comprising three synagogues: Lauderdale Road, Bevis Marks, and Wembley. It plays a vital and influential role in the life of Anglo Jewry. The Senior Rabbi will serve as an ambassador for Sephardim within the broader Jewish community and across British society.

#### The Role

The Senior Rabbi of the S&P Sephardi Community holds a dual-purpose position, serving both as the Leading Rabbi of Lauderdale Road Synagogue in London (W9) and as the Spiritual and Communal Head of the S&P Sephardi Community, guiding our broader Kahal across the UK. We are seeking an experienced community rabbi and leader with the capability to uphold and promote the unique S&P minhag and traditions, and to advocate for Orthodox Judaism within the Western Sephardi tradition.

The Senior Rabbi reports to the Parnas Presidente and the Board of Trustees, is based at Lauderdale Road, and is expected to attend professional and board meetings as required.

The role attracts a competitive remuneration package including accommodation in London W9.

#### Main Responsibilities

- Serve as the spiritual figurehead of the community, overseeing religious life across all synagogues, line-managing their ministers, and primarily leading at Lauderdale Road. Provide a strategic vision that reflects the community's historical importance and plans for future growth and outreach.
- Lead the congregation's religious and spiritual development, including Kriat HaTorah, preservation of hazanut and liturgy, and the promotion of the Spanish and Portuguese minhag across the kahal.
- Ensure effective spiritual, religious, and pastoral care for all members and their families.
- Actively participate in fundraising and development initiatives for the kahal.
- Lead on halakhic development, ensuring decisions by the Sephardi Beth Din and Kashrut Authority align with and reinforce the Western Sephardi Orthodox approach.
- Collaborate with the Board of Trustees, CEO, and local synagogue committees to implement strategies for the community's growth, sustainability, and member engagement.
- Represent the community through ambassadorial and educational activities throughout the UK.

## **Additional Responsibilities**

### **1. Rabbinic Leadership**

- Serve as a role model of religious observance and spiritual leadership.
- Provide guidance on religious practices and services, collaborating with other rabbis, synagogue committees, trustees, and yehidim.
- Lead services, including weekdays, Shabbat, and festival services at Lauderdale Road, maintaining S&P customs.
- Ensure the Hebra and cemeteries operate in accordance with Halakha and community traditions.
- Officiate at lifecycle events and create a welcoming environment at Lauderdale Road.
- Develop educational and social programs that serve all age groups, enhancing knowledge of Judaism, Halakha, Jewish culture, and Israel.
- Increase engagement in synagogue life and community initiatives.

### **2. Pastoral Care**

- Serve as the primary pastoral leader, offering sensitive support through all lifecycle events and challenges.
- Maintain a consistent schedule of visits and outreach to those experiencing illness, bereavement, or hardship.
- Strengthen the welfare support structure at Lauderdale Road.
- Host members regularly in order to build strong social connections across community demographics.
- Strengthen the cohort of newlyweds through post-wedding social opportunities

### **3. Halakhic and Religious Development**

- Act as Av Beth Din, upholding halakhic decision-making in the Western Sephardi tradition and responding to communal and personal issues.
- Deliver sermons that educate and inspire, particularly on Shabbat and festivals.
- Promote the reputation of the Sephardi Beth Din within the UK, Israel, and globally, ensuring recognition by the Rabbanut for conversions, weddings, and other matters.
- Support the Sephardi Kashrut Authority's efforts to provide accessible, affordable kashrut.
- Assist with the work of the London Board of Shechita.

### **4. Line Management of Ecclesiastical Staff**

- Meet regularly with rabbinic staff to provide mentorship, set goals, and support their development.
- Contribute to staff performance reviews and professional development plans.
- Foster a culture of excellence and mutual respect within the rabbinic team.

## 5. Fundraising

- Lead fundraising efforts, particularly for the Lauderdale Road campus redevelopment.
- Engage high-net-worth individuals and foundations through events and strategic outreach.

## 6. Education

- Ensure the delivery of annual classes and shiurim across the demographic spectrum.
- Provide educational opportunities with an approach grounded in tradition, focused on enhancing opportunities for women's engagement and participation within the Kahal in line with Orthodox values.
- Personally contribute to educational programming within and beyond the S&P congregation, using diverse formats (e.g., Shabbatonim, online lectures).
- Offer educational classes for engaged couples in the lead-up to their wedding, both for individuals and groups, while strengthening the cohort of newlyweds through post-wedding educational opportunities.
- Oversee the Rabbinic Ordination Programme in collaboration with the Montefiore Endowment.
- Create leadership and mentorship programs for Sephardi youth and young adults.
- Build partnerships with Naima Jewish Preparatory School.
- Design engaging and modern educational programming for children and teens, especially for Bnei Mitzvah age and beyond.

## 7. Public and Ambassadorial Profile

- Represent the community at public events and external functions as the lead ecclesiastical figure.
- Strengthen relationships with other Jewish communities by attending non-S&P synagogues when invited.
- Deliver public lectures and participate in communal, academic, and interfaith events.
- Utilize social media to enhance the profile and reach of the S&P congregation.

## 8. Publications

- Oversee the development of new and revised religious publications in collaboration with the community's Heshaim.
- Contribute to academic and religious publications when time permits, promoting understanding of Anglo Jewry and the S&P tradition.

## Experience and Qualifications

The role must be carried out in accordance with halakha as defined by the Sephardi Beth Din. A deep commitment to, and knowledge of, the rich and nuanced traditions of the Spanish and Portuguese minhag, including all aspects of synagogue liturgy and rituals, is essential.

### Essential Criteria

- Orthodox semikha recognized by the Sephardi Beth Din
- Exceptional communicator with the ability to deliver meaningful sermons and teachings
- Proven leadership experience in a large congregation
- Warm, approachable, and collaborative demeanor
- Excellent pastoral sensitivity and prioritization skills
- Inspirational teacher with broad knowledge of Torah, Jewish history, literature, and spirituality
- Commitment to ongoing learning and personal development
- Strong time management and organizational skills
- Proficiency with digital communication and social media platforms

### Desirable Criteria

- High level of secular education
- Strong and supportive connection to the Land and State of Israel

### How to Apply

Please send a covering letter and full CV to [recruitment@sephardi.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@sephardi.org.uk)

Please include scanned copies of any higher education qualifications including Semikha (rabbinic ordination) and undergraduate and graduate degrees.