



SHALOH HOUSE
PARENT HANDBOOK

PRESCHOOL





We'd Like to Introduce Ourselves

Most schools introduce themselves by describing their faculty, or their administrators, or their facility. We think Shaloh House Preschool will come into the clearest focus the quickest if we describe a different segment of our community – our students' parents.

The parents who choose Shaloh House are unique. They come from all walks of Jewish life and observance, but they share a commitment to give their children a superlative education. They are so devoted to this goal that many have spent months researching different schools.

Some parents came to us after hearing about how happy our school-children are. Others at first sent their children to better-known preschools in the area, but then “jumped ship” and enrolled their children with us after hearing about our intriguing curriculum and our astonishing teaching success. Some – despite the widespread availability of preschools – drive two-hours daily to send their children to our school.

Our parent body is wonderfully loyal, and they are our best advocates.



Our Philosophy

Preschoolers are precious – to their parents and to the Jewish community as a whole.

Judaism teaches that their nurture and education are crucial. Comparing a child to a little seedling, Judaism notes that the slightest benefit given to a fledgling plant is exponentially more significant than any benefit that can be given to an adult tree. Conversely, any deficit is much more harmful to a tender plant than it would be to a mature one..

We provide our preschoolers with five main nutrients:

Love.

They need a tremendous amount of love. We give it to them.

Light.

Their minds are growing faster than any other age-group's. We give them the best tools and guidance to help them discover our inspiring heritage and our magnificent world. Our teachers are renowned – some have been with us for 20 years – and we have superb specialists to teach them music and physical education.

Recognition.

We see each child as unique, and give them the one-on-one attention they need and crave.

Community.

Each classroom is a supportive, happy community of children and adults. Our “fledglings” grow strong and confident in our rich soil.

Structure.

Children thrive when their day is structured. We match their own body rhythms, and give them instruction, free play (whether inside or outside in our state-of-the-art playground), rest, and guided discoveries of their world in the proper doses at the proper times. We also provide nutritious and delicious kosher meals – including breakfasts, hot lunches and snacks. We tailor our meals to match individual dietary needs if necessary.





Arrival – Dismissal – Parking

Arrival is 8:15 AM. Early arrival (before 8:15) is also available by pre-registration.

Dismissal times vary, depending on the after-school plan you have chosen for your child. Consult our office or our website for more details on after-care programs.

Important drop-off/pick-up policies:

1. Whether at pick-up or drop-off, it is imperative that you a) make eye-contact with the teacher, and b) inform the teacher verbally that you are now dropping off or picking up your child.
2. If you prefer, another responsible adult can drop off or pick up your child, but only if you have made prior arrangements by filing a release form with our office designating this person as your authorized agent for pick-up/drop-off. For our children's safety, no child is released without a signed form.
3. Be on time. Students find it hard to adjust to school when they come late, and they worry when their parents don't pick them up on time. Please be prompt. If you are delayed more than 15 minutes for pick-up, after-care charges will be applied of \$10 per 15 minutes.

Parking

We have made arrangements for parents to park in specially marked drop-off zones along either side of Chestnut Hill Avenue (in front of the school). **Please do not park for more than 5 minutes for drop-off and pick-up.** If you need to cross the street, please use the crosswalk and allow the School Traffic Safety Officer to assist you. Please note there is no longer any parking or even stopping allowed on Dighton Street, and no double-parking is allowed on Chestnut Hill Ave. **For the safety of our children using the sidewalk, parents are not allowed to pull into the driveway for any reason.** Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Food and Allergies

All food is provided by the school, and no outside food is allowed to be brought in. We provide kosher and delicious breakfasts, hot lunches and snacks daily. Please notify us if your child has any allergies or unique dietary requirements.

Birthdays

Birthdays are wonderful. To celebrate your child's birthday in class, notify the teachers and the kitchen-staff at least a day or two ahead. The birthday party fee is \$25 for a cake (or a fruit platter); your donation also covers the cost of a new book to be added to the classroom's library in your child's honor. Because of kosher requirements, no outside food or candy may be brought to the school for the birthday, or on any day. **You are welcome to send goodie bags with non-food items.**

Birthday celebrations outside of school – Since class unity is so important, we ask that private birthday parties not be held on Saturday, in consideration of those children who keep Shabbat and won't be able to travel on that day. We suggest that all students be invited to birthday parties, but if for some reason this is not possible, please do not distribute invitations within the school building.

You can celebrate your party at Shaloh House! Many parents choose Shaloh House as a site for their parties. There are many possibilities in both catering and entertainment. For more details, see our office.





Extra-Curricular Activities

In addition to our multi-talented teaching staff, your child will be taught by specialists in music and gymnastics. In music, we have both weekly instruction as well as two concerts each year to demonstrate your child's achievements.

We believe in the value of outdoor play and exercise. On a daily basis (weather-permitting), your child will enjoy free-play in our state-of-the-art outdoor playground. The children also get weekly instruction in our indoor gymnasium with a trainer specially skilled in preschool coaching.

Kindergarten and Kindergarten Junior grades can also select from a variety of extra-curricular activities including chess, arts & crafts, Russian language, painting and Tae Kwon Do.

Personal Belongings

Please label *all* your child's belongings with a permanent marker - coat, jacket, sweater, gym shoes, boots, book bag, etc.

Clothing

Preschool children should have a change of clothing stored in their cubbies. Diapers and wipes should be kept stocked if necessary.

Emergency Information

Every child must have a current *Emergency Information* form, available from the front desk. This form must contain a working phone number of a responsible person who can be reached during the school day. Additionally, please send us a note promptly when your home, work, or cell numbers change so we can immediately update the Emergency form.

Wish List

Your throw-aways are our treasures! Please do not discard empty shoe boxes, tissue boxes or used-up paper towel rolls – these will become our artistic creations for our many projects. Instead, please send them in to school with your child! And – if you have digital cameras or voice recorders you are ready to replace, send us the old ones and we will put them to good use to document our classrooms' achievements.

Charity

Charity is the hallmark of Judaism. Send small coins in to school with your children to donate to our classrooms' charity boxes. We give charity daily.

PRESCHOOL SYLLABUS



Goals for the year:

Our goal for the year is to get the children ready for Kindergarten Junior. We do this in several different ways: **1) Socially** – We give them the love and warmth they need to grow and develop their confidence in themselves. We also teach them to play nicely, and to use their words to express themselves (as opposed to hitting, grabbing, or pushing). We give personalized attention to every child as we assist them in making projects, learning, or just by playing “cars” or “doll-house” with them. **2) Physically** – we work daily on gross and fine motor skills. **3) Academically** – We teach them letters, weather, colors, shapes, and numbers. We assess each child’s level and progress. We constantly challenge their minds without pushing too much.

Daily schedule:

8:15-8:30 Morning Activity
 8:30-9:00 Crafts/Manipulatives/Singing
 9:00-9:30 Breakfast/bathroom
 9:30-10:15 Davening/Judaic studies
 10:15-10:30 Break
 10:30-11:15 Mon/Wed - Dance
 11:15-11:45 Centers!
 11:45- 12:00 Break
 12-1 Outside time
 1-1:45 Lunch and bathroom
 1:45-3 Rest/nap time
 3:15 Snack/restroom
 3:45 Afterschool activities: Stories, art, challah making, etc.

Overall Curriculum for the Year

September- mid October

- Getting used to classroom routines
- Learning about the Holidays
- Starting level 1 worksheets

Mid October- December

- Alphabet A-G
- Color Unit
- Fall Unit
- Hebrew: Aleph-Lamed
- Chanukah

January- March

- Alphabet H-O
- Shape Unit
- Winter Unit
- Level 2 worksheets
- Hebrew: Lamed-Samech
- Tu B'Shevat, Purim

April-June

- Alphabet P-Z
- Number Unit
- Level 3 worksheets
- Hebrew: Ayin-Tav
- Pesach

Judaic Curriculum

Brachos: We teach the children to say brachos (blessings) before eating. We also teach which bracha to make on which foods.

Davening: Circle time starts with davening (prayer) which we make lively through singing and hand/body motions. Every day, it's a different child's turn to hold the Torah (Bible- it's a toy one). We also give Tzedaka (charity) every day, and read mitzvah notes (notes from parents about a good deed the child has done). The children make a Siddur (prayer book) in the end of the year to daven with throughout the summer.

Parasha: We teach the Parasha (portion of the bible of the week) every day during circle time. The children know the name of the parasha that week. We sing: (TTTO: The wheels on the bus) "The Parasha of the week is ____" We also teach them the story line or a basic point/mitzvah (commandment) from the Parasha. Children often learn through creating a project/ model that helps reinforce the story.

Holidays: We teach the children about the holidays and what is special about each one. In addition to this, we make projects about the holidays.

Shabbos Parties: We make Shabbos parties every Friday. We sing, laugh, talk, and we make Kiddush on grape juice. Then we eat our Shabbos treats and dance. The children love acting out Shabbos customs and activities.

Aleph Bet: Every week starting in the beginning of October, we learn a letter of the Aleph Bet (Hebrew alphabet). We will send home a letter for you to hang up at home, to serve as a constant review and reinforcement. We also teach simple Hebrew words that begin with that letter.

Important note: Children are not expected to be fluent with the ABC, even at the end of the year. This year is just an introduction.

General Studies Curriculum

Alphabet: Every week, starting in the middle of October, we learn a letter of the English Alphabet. During the week we do a project or activity to familiarize the children with the letter. Here are some examples but every year it's subject to adjustment and modification:

A – We make a puppet **a**lligator. This strength-ens their perception of 'A', while of course, strengthening fine/gross motor skills.

F – **F**inger-painting (fine motor skills)

J – Games that involve **j**umping (**J**umping **J**acks) (gross motor skills)

N – Children glue letters to spell out their **n**ames and then we staple it forming a hat

P – Bake **p**izza, sing pizza song that demonstrates the spelling of pizza

S – Children help cut up a **s**alad or **s**oup

T – **T**racing a **t**ree, **t**ruck or **t**iger

In addition to the official learning of the Alphabet, we give children puzzles to help boost their recognition of the letters.

Vocabulary: Every week we learn English words that begin with the letter of that week. We read our vocabulary book everyday and then send home optional coloring sheets.

Science: We touch upon basic parts of science including exploring five senses, seasons, and weather.

Mathematics: Children learn to recognize numbers 1 to 10 and learn to count at least until 20. We teach this via worksheets, stories and visual aids.

Languages in the classroom:

Although our language in the classroom is primarily English, we also have fluent Hebrew and Russian speakers among our teachers.

Physical Skills

Gross Motor Skills: Kids this age have plenty of energy, so we let them express it fully. Besides for our weekly gym class, the children love acting out songs with the motions we teach. (Ex. Our planting, digging, and crushing song-dance.) We also put on music and movement CD's and the children sing and do the correct motions or act out zoo animals.

In addition to this, we play outside in our state-of-the-art playground, and we have group games like pass-the-ball around, or duck-duck-goose and much more...

Fine Motor Skills: We work on those small finger muscle movements that are needed for activities such as painting with a paintbrush; beading; cutting with scissors; drawing and writing using a pencil, crayon or marker correctly; and holding and manipulating small objects (such as sorting).

We help develop these muscles by using pegs, playing with play dough, matching and pasting, to name a few.

Social Skills: Children are encouraged to share, care, and include others. They are taught to talk instead of getting physical.

Worksheets: The children do fun, child-friendly worksheets that teach them how to draw lines, shapes and objects. This prepares them for handwriting and improves their fine motor skills. Children also get matching sheets, or "draw an X over the picture that is different" sheets, and eventually get cutting and pasting worksheets.

Daily information

What to bring to school: On the first day of school: Complete change of clothes (keep it up to date), and a blanket and sheet for taking a nap (only those children who are part of the after-school program)

Everyday: Please bring weather appropriate attire. We go outside everyday.

Mitzvah notes (notes from parents about a good deed the child has done) can be brought to school to encourage your child. An example would be: 'Sara got dressed right away when her mommy told her.' 'Ben shared his toys with his brother and then cleaned up.'

Please label your child's belongings with permanent marker.

Teachers are not responsible for any toys brought to school.

Child drop-off: Please wash your child's hands with soap prior to bringing him into the classroom. This prevents flu from going around. We suggest you stay for a few minutes, not too short or too long to make the goodbyes smooth and easy for the child. Not more than 2-3 minutes.

Our teachers need to supervise the class, so please keep conversations with teachers short and to the point. The children need her attention!

Cleanup: Children are softly encouraged to cleanup and help set up chairs. This teaches them responsibility and of course, orderliness.

Medication: If a child needs Medication during school, the parent must bring written permission prior to giving medication.

Restrooms: Children entering preschool should be fully toilet trained. All children must use the facilities at the designated times (in addition to any time they ask us). The reasons for this are to reduce interruptions during learning time, and to prevent accidents.

Projects: Projects only go home on Fridays or the last day of school that week. Some projects have stages, so please don't take projects during the week. Please take the right project bag on your child's hook.

Newsletter: Every week you can expect to receive a classroom newsletter along with the projects. This newsletter will provide you with an update on how things are going, what we've been learning, and any important messages to parents regarding the children or events. Please take the time to read the newsletters, and review questions and songs.

Love Light Recognition Community Structure

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