



Family Handbook

2022-2023

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Table of Contents

Calendar	3
General Information	
Mission Statement	6
Curriculum	6
Goals	6
Values	7
Classrooms	7
Family Involvement	8
Home and School Communication	9
ParentSquare	9
Family Information Board	9
School Programs and Hours	9
Extended day	9
Rest Time	9
Registration	10
Enrollment Procedures	11
Tuition	11
Tuition Payment Policy	11
Donations	12
Parking	12
Security	12
Information from Home	12
School Closings	13
Meet and Greets	13
Conferences	13
Classroom Visits	13
Child Care Licensing	13
Policies	
Pick-up and Drop-off of Children	15
Successful Departures	15
Promptness	15
Dismissal	15
Person Authorized to Pick-up Child	15
Daily Closing Time Policy	16
Late Pick-up Policy	16
Withdrawal from the Center	16
Termination of Services	16
Health Matters	16
Sun Safety	17
Medications	19
Emergency Procedures	20
Discipline Philosophy	20

State of California Discipline Guidelines	20
Child Abuse and Neglect	21
Confidentiality of Records	21
Children with Special Needs	21
Lunches	21
Snacks	22
Food Allergies	22
Birthdays	23
Special Days	23
Field Trips	23
Toilet Training	23
Clothing	24
Outdoor Play	25
Toys and Personal Belongings	25
Staff Outside Work Policy	25
Teacher Gifts	25
Yearly Events and Special Programs	
Special Programs and Holiday Celebrations	26
Shabbat	26
Back To School Night	26
Summer Program	26

2022-23 Calendar

August

8/11 Thursday

Back to school Meet and Greet

8/12 Friday

Back to school Meet and Greet

8/15 Monday

First day of school! (Boo-Hoo/Woo-Hoo Breakfast)

8/25 Thursday

Back to School Night-adults only

September

9/5 Monday

Labor Day-**School closed**

9/26 Monday

Rosh Hashanah- **School closed**

9/27 Tuesday

Rosh Hashanah- **School closed**

October

10/4 Tuesday

Kol Nidre-**School closes at 3pm**

10/5 Wednesday

Yom Kippur-**School closed**

10/10 Monday

Sukkot-**School closed**

10/17 Monday

Simchat Torah-**School closed**

Fall Photos-date TBD

November

11/11 Friday

Staff Development Day-**School closed**

11/18 Friday

(Tentative-Thanksgiving Party 11:15)

11/23 Wednesday

School closes at 3pm

11/24 Thursday-11/25 Friday

Thanksgiving-**School closed**

December

12/16 Friday

(Tentative-Hanukkah Party 11:00)

12/18 Sunday

First Hanukkah candle

12/19 Monday- 1/2 Monday

Winter Break-**School closed**

January

1/3 Tuesday

School re-opens

1/16 Monday

Martin Luther King Jr. Day-**School closed**

1/17 Tuesday

Family/Teacher Conferences-**School closed**

February

2/6 Monday
2/20 Monday

Tu B'shevat
President's Day-**School closed**

March

3/3 Friday
3/7 Tuesday
3/13 Monday

(Tentative-Purim Party 11:00)
Purim
Staff Development Day-**School closed**

April

4/5 Thursday
4/6 Thursday
4/6 Thursday-4/13 Wednesday
4/10 Monday-4/14 Friday
4/26 Wednesday

First Passover Seder
First day of Passover-**School closed**
Passover-special dietary rules apply
Spring Break-**School closed**
Yom HaAtzmaut

May

5/26 Friday
5/29 Monday

Spring Pictures TBD
Shavuot-**School closed**
Memorial Day- **School closed**

June

6/9 Friday
6/12 Monday-6/16 Friday
6/19 Monday

(Tentative-Last Day of school Celebration 11:00)
School closed
First Summer Session Begins

Families are welcome to attend Preschool Shabbat with us!
During the school year, Preschool Shabbat Service is at 10:00 am every Friday school is in session. During the summer, Preschool Shabbat is at 9:00 am.

Dates and events on this calendar are subject to change with advance notice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to SHECC!

We are so excited that your family has chosen to be a part of our community. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with important information about our program. Please be sure to read it and contact the director with any questions.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center creates a safe, nurturing, developmentally appropriate, play-based & child-centered Jewish early childhood environment. We are inspired by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia, rooted in our congregational community and Reform Jewish values.

Curriculum

Our curriculum promotes learning through play, social interactions and hands-on exploration. We provide a variety of individualized materials and activities based on our observations of each child's skills and interests. This enables our teachers to provide interesting activities for every child within our rich environment. We maintain a thoughtful balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, responding to individual learning styles. Emphasis is placed on the process rather than the end product and we encourage children to explore classroom materials in thoughtful and meaningful ways.

Children benefit from having clearly defined, well-equipped interest areas that support independence and encourage decision-making skills. Our program provides a wide array of interest areas and materials intentionally placed to encourage children to make choices for themselves.

GOALS

Specific goals of the Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center are:

1. To foster and strengthen a positive self-image, self-esteem and confidence
2. To develop and practice critical thinking and problem solving skills
3. To nurture a positive Jewish identity with our Jewish students, and to share Jewish culture and tradition through music, holiday celebrations, special Shabbat services and interaction with the Rabbis and Cantor with all the children and families in our program.
4. To further intellectual development; to foster cognitive learning, concept formation, self-understanding, and community building
5. To provide opportunities for large and small motor development through specific classroom activities
6. To promote language development
7. To develop fantasy play that facilitates imagination, ideas and creative thinking processes
8. To foster awareness of the world by participating in and being viewed as respected members of the community
9. To foster creativity and free self-expression

10. To help the child learn self-control, delayed gratification, and to build attention span.
11. To develop emotional intelligence through encouraging the expression of all feelings, such as fear, anger and happiness, in acceptable ways; to develop qualities such as the capacity for fun, humor, perseverance and optimism
12. To provide an environment that gives the child the opportunity to learn-by-doing: moving from concrete hands-on experiences to more abstract concept development

VALUES

Our staff and children are encouraged to implement these values during their time at school. Our hope is that all our families will join us in adopting these values to live by:

- ❖ *Chaverut* - Friendship – Embracing and caring about all the people in our program
- ❖ *Tzedekah* – Justice and Righteousness
- ❖ *Tikkun Olam* – Caring for the world and our environment – locally and globally
- ❖ Torah – Study and worship
- ❖ *Ruach* – Spirit - To find joy in all parts of our lives.
- ❖ *Klal Yisrael* – Community and inclusiveness
- ❖ *Chaknasot Orchim* -Welcoming the Guest – being a gracious host to visitors of our school

Classrooms

- Bumblebees-2 year olds
 - 2 teachers and 12 children
- Rollie Pollies-Mixed age (2.75-4.5)
 - 2 teachers and 14 children
- Dragonflies-Mixed age (2.75-4.5)
 - 2 teachers and 14 children
- Little Bears-Mixed age (2.75-4.5)
 - 2 teachers and 14 children
- Grasshoppers-Mixed age (2.75-4.5)
 - 2 teachers and 14 children
- Hummingbirds- (Transitional Kindergarten)
 - 2 teachers and 14 children

Children may join the Bumblebee class on their second birthday. This special age is a perfect time to foster an early love of learning and grow healthy social skills with our play-based, age-appropriate program. Children do not have to be toilet trained to begin preschool.

Our program honors the children’s interests and passions. Yes, children have passions! Socialization is important in all of our classrooms. Learning to get along with classmates and trusting teachers to care about you as much as your family does is central to our mission.

At the end of their time as a Bumblebee, children move up into one of the mixed age classes. In these classes, the children are with the same teachers for two years. We call this continuity of care. The children, teachers and families get to know each other very well.

Often in early childhood programs, it takes 6 weeks for everyone to get to know each other and settle into a routine. When a child is enrolled in a class with a continuity of care model, that settling-in time is reduced, and the work and play of the classroom doesn't skip a beat.

Children are at many different developmental levels socially, cognitively and emotionally. A transitional kindergarten program that is rich in exploration, creativity, learning, and play allows children to grow and thrive. In the Hummingbird class, the children form deep friendships and establish their own community guided by two teachers who understand all the nuances of this age. Learning is done through games and engaging activities. Weekly community field trips are part of the transitional kindergarten program.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

We welcome family involvement in the program. Involvement opportunities include:

- Donations of materials-teachers post wishlists on an as-needed basis
- Monetary donations
- Volunteer time
 - School celebrations
 - Field trip chaperones
 - Reading books
 - Cooking projects
 - Other classroom projects/opportunities - contact your teacher!

Community is important to us! In addition to the Hummingbirds weekly field trips, all classes have the opportunities to take community field trips (Fire station, library, grocery store, Pizza My Heart, Los Gatos Creek Trail). Classes do use public transportation on occasion.

Family Council (formerly known as parent council) is made up of parents and guardians whose children are enrolled in the Early Childhood Center. All parents and guardians of children enrolled in the school are members of the Family Council. We encourage all families to get involved.

The responsibilities of the Family Council include, but are not limited to: assisting the director and assistant director in the planning and executing school celebrations, to act as a sounding board for policy changes and budgetary items, and to plan teacher appreciation. The Family Council meets monthly, usually during the day. However, that meeting time will be changed if interested families find an evening meeting to be more practical for their schedule.

In lieu of fundraising, each family will be assessed a \$100.00 donation to the Family Council fund. You will see that as an item due on your tuition statement at the beginning of the school year. This fee goes toward covering the children's fees for the Thanksgiving lunch, Chanukah lunch, and end-of-year picnic. The remaining balance goes into a separate fund and is used for student scholarships, large equipment purchases that benefit all the children, special classroom teacher funds, and staff development.

Room Volunteers (formerly known as room parents) assist the classroom teachers as needed. Among other things, they arrange for volunteers for field trips and other purposes, and inform families of special events. Room volunteers are encouraged to participate in the Family Council.

Please do not hesitate to talk to the director, assistant director, your child's teacher, or our family council leaders about the many ways you can get involved. We are sure you will find your participation to be a very rewarding way to enhance your child's experience with us, to get involved with the Shir Hadash community, and to learn more about the Early Childhood Center.

HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Open communication between families and school is vitally important in our ongoing relationship. Since the primary responsibility of the staff is the safe supervision and instruction of the children in our care, there may be times when the classroom staff is not able to engage in a lengthy discussion. You may schedule a mutually agreeable time to speak or meet with the teachers. The director or assistant director are usually available for phone calls, face-to-face meetings, and email messages if the teaching staff is occupied with their class. Your messages and information will be relayed to the teachers.

If there has been an unusual or special circumstance during the day, this information will be passed on to the families verbally or by written note. Serious incidents shall be communicated verbally and if possible, via the phone, at the time of the incident.

ParentSquare: Families are informed of the activities of the Center through a secure online platform called ParentSquare. Information is posted weekly about school happenings, a weekly calendar of events, and field trips. Articles of interest to families are also added. It can be used for RSVPs to events, as well as requests for materials and volunteers for specific projects. This platform is password protected and you must receive an invitation from the Director to access the site. Teachers will also use ParentSquare to post information and photos of their individual class.

THE FAMILY INFORMATION BOARD: located at the entrance of the school, is another important means of communication between the Center and families. Notices of illness, dates of closure, and other daily information will be posted. You will also receive email communications of this same information. Please check this calendar daily.

BLUE LOCKBOX: Tuition checks and other paperwork can be turned in to the blue mailbox located to the left of the ECC office doors. Please do not hand tuition checks or paperwork to your child's teacher, put it in children's backpack or lunch or slip it under the office door. We are not responsible for paperwork or payment that is lost if it is delivered in one of these ways.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND HOURS

Our half day program is 8:30-1:00

Full day program hours are 8:30-4:30.

We offer extended care from 7:00am-6:00pm

EXTENDED DAY: If your child is not enrolled in extended day, you may request early drop off or late pick up for your child. Reservations must be made in advance by email to the Director or a phone call to the office and will be granted if there is space. Please do not request the reservation from the classroom teacher. Reservations are required for those children who need to use Extended Day for Early Drop-off.

Extended Day charges are:

- \$20 for early drop off
- \$40 for 1pm-4:30
- \$60 for 1pm-6pm
- \$20 for 4:30-6pm

REST TIME

All children who remain in school past 1:00 pm, with the exception of the TK class, will be given the opportunity to rest on individual cots. Families provide a fitted crib-size sheet and small light-weight blanket. All resting materials are to be labeled. Please do not send in traditional sleeping bags or large adult size pillows, we are unable to store them. Sheets and blankets will be sent home weekly on your child's last weekly attendance day for laundering. You are required to return the resting materials the following week. We will provide your child with a clean sheet if you forget to bring in your child's linens. There is a \$15 fee if school sheets are not returned. A labeled comfort item,

such as a small stuffed animal may also be brought in for nap time if desired.

We do our best to provide an appropriate sleeping environment. Rest time is no longer than 2 hours. Some children choose not to sleep and in those cases we cannot force a nap. **In accordance with licensing regulations, we can neither keep a child from sleeping nor wake them up before the scheduled end of nap time.** After a minimum of 45 minutes of quiet rest, those children not sleeping will be provided with quiet activities or given the opportunity to play outside if staffing allows.

REGISTRATION

The Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center is thankful to have so many families interested in enrolling their children in our program. As enrollment in our school becomes increasingly competitive, we are mandated by the Board of Trustees of Congregation Shir Hadash to enroll all children who are members of the congregation. We may not be able to guarantee placement in classes to children who are not members of Congregation Shir Hadash, except for continuing students. If you have questions with regard to this, please speak to the director.

The following enrollment policy was adopted by the Preschool Committee of the Board of Trustees of Shir Hadash, and is as follows:

All new applicants will fall into one of the following four categories:

Category 1 - Congregants with children who are currently enrolled

Category 2 - Congregants with children who are not currently enrolled

Category 3 - Non-congregants with children who are currently enrolled

Category 4 - Non-congregants with children who are not currently enrolled

Applications will be distributed to everyone in January. The deadline for returning applications will be one month later. An application fee must accompany the initial application. Application fees are not refundable and are not applied to tuition. The application fee covers the cost of processing your application.

Priority of enrollment will be given to category 1 applicants. After placing category 1 applicants, we will give any available spaces to category 2 applicants, and so on with category 3, and finally category 4.

Priority within each category will go to the applicants in the order in which the applications are received. We will date applications as they are returned. Applications received before the application deadline will all be dated with the deadline date.

Children will be placed on a waiting list when a class is full. Member children will always get priority on the waiting list before any non-member children.

Anyone wishing to be considered a congregant for priority purposes must be a congregant in good standing by the deadline for returning applications.

Families are strongly encouraged to visit the program before enrollment. The adult will have the opportunity to see our environment, meet our teachers, and discuss our program and the needs of the child. An Open House is scheduled for a Sunday afternoon in January for those families who are unable to visit Shir Hadash ECC on a weekday.

After applications are processed, you will receive an Admission Agreement for your child. You must return a signed copy of that agreement with a tuition deposit equal to one month's tuition payment by the date specified in the agreement. Failure to return the agreement and deposit in a timely fashion may cause you to lose your space in the school.

SHECC is an equal opportunity provider. As such, we will grant equal service opportunity to all qualified children regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, ancestry, disability and language.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

We are licensed to serve 79 children on a daily basis ranging in age from 2 years through entry into Kindergarten. Before a child can begin a program at Shir Hadash, the following state requirements must be completed:

- An interview or tour with the director or assistant director
- Emergency information and release
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Child health history (parents' report)
- Statement of personal rights
- Physician's report with TB clearance
- Statement of parents' rights
- Complete immunization record
- Signed admission & financial agreement
- Registration fee, tuition deposit and monthly tuition

In all cases, the Center requires a four week written notice of withdrawal, or tuition fees will continue to be charged to and withdrawn from your account.

When an opening at the Center becomes available, the Director will fill the vacancy based on the following priorities: re-enrollment of a child, or a new enrollee from the top of the waiting list who is of the appropriate age and is requesting the schedule available for the opening. Once the family of the new enrollee is contacted and offered the position, they will be given one working day to notify the director whether or not they accept the position. One month's tuition is required to secure the position. Families may decline to enroll their child once without losing their place on the waiting list. After two offers of enrollment are declined, the child will be placed at the end of the waiting list. It is the family's responsibility to keep the Director updated with their waiting list contact information.

TUITION

Congregation Shir Hadash is a nonprofit organization and the Early Childhood Center operates on the tuition fees from each child. Therefore, it is essential that your fees be paid promptly and regularly. **We do not refund or credit tuition for illness, vacation or COVID quarantine.**

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Pandemic Addendum - TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

During the COVID 19 pandemic, tuition will be a month-to-month obligation. Tuition is broken down into 10 monthly payments, August through May. Tuition will not be refunded if the county public health department requires a class to close due to positive COVID cases. Families who choose to withdraw their children for reasons other than those listed in our withdrawal policy (see page 16) will be obligated to pay tuition for the remainder of the school year.

Your child's yearly tuition is broken down into ten monthly fees for ease of payment. Scheduled holidays and all other holidays have already been considered at this rate and therefore no adjustments will be made to the monthly tuition fees.

Preschool tuition is to be paid monthly by the 15th of the month and is considered **past due on the 20th**, at which time a **\$40** late charge will be assessed to the account. When your child is absent, the fees are still due in full. If payment is still not made **by the 22nd** of the month, child care will be discontinued until payment is made in full. Your child will lose their placement in the school if you have not paid or made special arrangements by the end of the month. Children may not attend school unless the tuition is current. A child may re-enter the program after tuition payments are current and space is available. In the event that the child does not return to the school, the security deposit will be retained by the Shir Hadash.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact the director to make arrangements and explore options.

In order to ensure proper credit to your account, your check or money order should be made payable to Shir Hadash with the child's full name in the memo portion of the check. Direct withdrawal from your bank account is another tuition payment option. You will be provided with instructions to set up online payments once you are fully enrolled in the program.

A \$30.00 fee will be assessed on any returned checks.

Families' tuition payments must be current in the prior year to enter camp or school the next year. To register in January for the next school year, tuition must be paid up according to the policy i.e.: six months paid for monthly payers. If these stipulations are not met, the child's application for the following school year will not be processed.

DONATIONS

Donations are always welcome. Gifts from families and friends enrich our early childhood program.

PARKING

When you drop off or pick up your child, you may use the Shannon Road or the Cherry Blossom Lane parking lot. Please park your car in a legal space in the parking lot. No one is permitted to park or stop along the curb in front of the building or leave their motor running. Always drive at a safe rate of speed and refrain from using your cell phone when driving in our parking lot so that your full attention can be given to pedestrians. It is prohibited to park in an accessible space unless you have a disability placard displayed on the rearview mirror or your license plate.

Always enter the school through the main entrance off the Shannon Rd. parking lot.

SECURITY

We are in the process of updating our security system. Full instructions and information will be provided when the updates are completed.

Security cameras are installed on both the exterior and interior of the building.

Dismissal at 1pm can become hectic. Your teachers may ask you to wait in the hallway as they dismiss half day children. Teachers are required to know that the children are released to the appropriate adult and may ask to see a photo ID if they don't personally recognize the adult picking up that day.

When dropping off, the adult must make sure the teacher knows the child has arrived. California Child Care Licensing mandates that the person signing a child in and out of the center is 18 or older.

INFORMATION FROM HOME

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please inform us as soon as possible. Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially.

Common causes of distress include family members being away from home for any reason, the arrival of a new sibling, a new person living in the home, illness of a family member, any hospitalization, accident or death in the family, a new caretaker or any new employee, moving or the death of a pet.

The teachers and director will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment, which may affect your child as well.

In separation and divorce situations, without legal documentation, the staff cannot act as though one guardian is more entitled than another to the legal rights of their child and we will endeavor to treat both guardians equally.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center is closed on the following legal holidays:

January 1 st	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day	Memorial Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving and the Friday after
December 25th	July 4 th or the day it is celebrated if it falls on a weekend

If January 1st and July 4th occur during a weekend, school will be closed on the designated observed day.

Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center is closed on the following Jewish holidays **if they fall on a weekday:**

1 st and 2 nd days of Rosh Hashanah	Simchat Torah
Yom Kippur	1 st and 7 th day of Passover
Sukkot (1 st day)	Shavuot (1 st day)

Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center will close early at 3:00 PM on the following days if they fall on a weekday:

Erev (eve of) Rosh Hashanah	Kol Nidre (evening before Yom Kippur)
Wednesday before Thanksgiving	Erev Pesach (eve of Passover)

We are closed for two Staff In-Service Days.

Please refer to your school calendar (pg. 3-4) for a list of days school will be closed.

MEET AND GREETs

Families are the heart of SHECC! Before the beginning of each school year and as new families enroll, your classroom teacher will set up a meet and greet with you to learn more about your family and your child or children. This is a time to share with your teachers a little bit about your home life and family structure as well as insight into your child.

CONFERENCES

Children in the center are formally assessed twice a year. The first assessment is discussed at Family/Teacher conferences in mid-January. Assessments are sent home a few days before the day you will be conferencing with your child's teacher. The purpose of these conferences is to discuss your child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development and to establish understanding, cooperation, and consistency between home and school. Your observations are an important ingredient in the teachers' relationship with your child. The second assessment is distributed near the end of the school year. Conferences are not scheduled for this assessment, however you may request a conference with the teacher.

Whenever the need arises, families or teachers may request a time to discuss a child's development.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

Regular staff development benefits your child and the program of the Center. Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center will be closed two days annually for staff development. Care will not be provided on those days. Additional staff development will take place in the evenings or at other times school is not in session. If your child's teacher is fortunate to attend an outside conference, an appropriate, qualified substitute will cover that class.

CLASSROOM VISITS

We will be re-evaluating our COVID related policies on family members in the classrooms. We hope to be able to welcome you into the classrooms soon!

CHILD CARE LICENSING

The State of California inspects child care centers annually and if a complaint is made. The licensing analysts have the right to interview your child without a center staff member present in the room.

POLICIES

PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

When dropping off or picking up your child, it is a STATE REQUIREMENT that your child be signed in and out from the Center. This must include the exact time of arrival accompanied by your full signature (NO initials or abbreviations). This information is vital in the event of a catastrophe. We will use the sign in sheets to confirm which children are present in the school. **DISREGARD OF THIS PRACTICE WILL** result in a penalty charge of **\$20** for each omission. Chronic disregard may result in termination of services.

SUCCESSFUL DEPARTURES

Your child's teacher will assist you in establishing a drop off routine. We have found that it is in the best interest of your child if you do not linger, as this may make separation more difficult. Never leave your child without saying goodbye. Assure them of your confidence in the school and their ability to succeed. Our goal is to make arrival time a positive experience, one that encourages children to feel warmly welcomed and secure. All children must be signed-in by the adult bringing the child to school.

So that they are able to fully experience the program and to receive the most benefit, we ask that children arrive by 9am.

PROMPTNESS

We ask that you do not enter your child's classroom before the school day begins at 8:30 am. Our teachers are preparing for the morning prior to 8:30 AM. In the same regard, it is very important to the child that they arrive at school on time.

It is difficult for a child to enter the class after the day has begun and can create a difficult goodbye. All children should arrive by 9am. Your punctuality is appreciated.

We do understand that life happens. Please let us know if you will be arriving after 10am.

For children attending on the 7 am to 6 pm schedule, there is a designated classroom for children arriving before 8:30 am.

DISMISSAL

Children are permitted to leave school **only** with those adults you have indicated on the Emergency Information Form. Be sure that your child understands with whom they are going home. People under the age of 18 are not permitted to leave the school with a child. Students must be picked up by someone over the age of 18.

If your child is going home with someone other than his or her regular driver, please inform the teacher with an email or dated note, and let the pick-up person know that we will check their photo ID.

Your child must be signed out of the school at the end of the day.

PERSON AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILD

Families must provide us with the names and telephone numbers of persons authorized to pick-up their child. It is the family's responsibility to notify the director and teacher of any changes in this authorization. If someone other than the authorized person (as indicated on child's emergency form or in the child's file) is to pick up your child, please notify us in writing and make sure the person picking up is prepared to show us their photo id.

We will release children to authorized persons only.

Please keep us informed. All information on the emergency and authorization form and in your child's file must be kept current. It is your responsibility to inform the preschool office of changes such as:

- Home phone, cell phones and address
- Work place, phone numbers and cell phone

- Name of child's physician, address and phone number
- Persons authorized to pick up your child and their phone numbers

DAILY CLOSING TIME POLICY

SHECC closes promptly at 6pm. We expect all children to be picked up on time. Please arrive with enough time to gather your child and their belongings **before** closing. Your child's teacher would love to chat with you about your child's day-if you'd like to check in with them at pick up, plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the dismissal time.

If an emergency delays you and you are going to be late picking up your child, please call the Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center office or cell phone before pick-up or closing time. (We suggest that you carry the school's number with you at all times.)

In the event that your child is still at school after pick-up or closing time and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps (in order):

1. Attempt to reach you at home, by your mobile phone, and/or work.
2. Call the people listed on the Emergency Information Form.
3. If we are unable to reach you after 45 minutes, we will call Los Gatos PD and/or CPS.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

We understand that families may be late picking up their children from preschool on occasion. Should you find yourself in this situation, please notify us if at all possible. Please be careful and take your time getting to school on that rare occasion that you may find yourself late.

You will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute when your child remains at the center after their dismissal time. Notifying the school of your delay does not excuse you from the late fees. Late fees accrued during the month will be billed with your tuition payable via your standard payment method.

Continued disregard of this policy may result in termination of services for your family.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the school office or classroom teachers in the event they are delayed. If the Center has not been notified of emergency delays, and is unable to locate a parent/guardian or one of the listed emergency contacts within 45 minutes of closing, Child Protective Services will be contacted. CPS will promptly arrive to provide your child with the protective services they deem necessary for the safety and well being of your child.

WITHDRAWAL

Children may be withdrawn from the Center at any time, without financial penalty, when a **4-week written notice** is provided. The Center requires that all withdrawals be submitted in writing. All withdrawals must be submitted at least four weeks before the last day of attendance, or tuition costs will continue to accrue.

Exceptions to this policy are the following circumstances:

1. Moving more than a 20 mile radius from Shir Hadash
2. Financial hardship
3. Change in employment circumstances

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

Services may be immediately terminated for reasons, which shall include (but not be limited to), the following:

- 1) Any account delinquent for more than **7 days**.
- 2) Two incidents of late tuition payment
- 3) If the parent or guardian refuses to sign forms required for the entrance or the continued enrollment of their child

- 4) Refusal by the parent, guardian, or emergency designee to pick up a child deemed unable or unwilling to participate cooperatively in classroom activities; due to illness, possible impending illness, lethargy, or uncontrollable harmful and/or disruptive behavior. Families of children enrolled at Shir Hadash ECC understand that under such circumstances they must be available and willing to pick up their child or authorize their designated emergency persons to do so. In the event the emergency persons listed are unable to make pick up arrangements promptly (**no longer than 30 minutes**), it becomes the sole responsibility of the parents or guardians to do so.
- 5) When a child is causing harm to themselves or others due to dangerous or unsafe behavior.
- 6) In the event that Shir Hadash ECC is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family for any reason.
- 7) Failure to provide Shir Hadash ECC with current work and home telephone numbers and to report any such future changes which would enable us to contact them in the event of emergency or illness in the most expeditious manner.
- 8) We close promptly at 6:00 p.m. Late departures are charged one dollar per minute. **Continued disregard will result in termination of services.**
- 9) Disregard of mandatory sign-in and out procedures.
- 10) Behavior of the parent/guardian, which may be reasonably interpreted as harassment, verbal abuse, or physical abuse toward staff or others present. We reserve the right to discontinue anyone we consider disruptive to the harmonious operation of the center.
- 11) Refusal to comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this handbook.
- 12) Parents/guardians are required to escort their child directly into the classroom and make certain the teacher has acknowledged their arrival. Unescorted arrivals and/or lack of adult supervision of children prior to classroom admittance and/or their departure from the premises are causes for immediate termination of services.

If we discontinue enrollment of your child from the Early Childhood Center, tuition, registration fees, and deposits will not be refunded.

HEALTH MATTERS

In addition to all the health policies below, these policies are added during the pandemic time.

1. *If your child is sent home with a fever or any other COVID symptom, your child must be symptom-free for 48 hours before returning to school.*
2. *If your child becomes sick in any way during the school day, they will be isolated in a separate room from the class with a designated caregiver. You are required to pick up your child in 30 minutes or less. There is also a bathroom designated for children who are ill.*
3. *Children, adults and staff may not enter the building if the following signs of illness are present, even if fever free: runny nose, cough, red/watery eyes, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, rash or stomach pain.*
4. *Children and adults with a temperature above 100 degrees will not be permitted in the school building.*
5. *If a child, family member, or staff member comes in contact with an individual who tests positive for COVID-19, the ECC office must be notified immediately. The child or staff member will not be allowed to return to school for 14 days.*
6. *If a child becomes ill or is sent home, the child must stay home until fever free and symptom free (without medication) for 48 hours and must provide clearance from a doctor in writing. Tuition will not be refunded or credited.*
7. *If you or a member of your household becomes ill with COVID 19, you must notify us immediately. Your child will not be allowed to attend school while the household member is ill and for 14 days after recovery. If a child or staff member becomes ill with COVID 19, the classroom will be closed for 24 to 48 hours before it is cleaned. The person who is sick will stay home until they are no longer infectious and are cleared to return to school by health professionals. The County Health Department and the Department of Social Services (Child Care Licensing) will be notified. The County Health Department has the final decision if school and/or cohort needs to be closed and if all the children and teachers in the affected class need to be quarantined.*

Health Assessment

The Shir Hadash ECC provides you with a Health History form that must be completed by parents/guardians and returned before your child starts school. A Physician's Report including a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's licensed physician or nurse practitioner will also need to be submitted before your child is enrolled. We follow the immunization requirements set by the State of California. No personal or religious exemptions of immunizations will be accepted. It is vital that you notify us of any allergies or medical conditions.

Accidents and Emergencies

Our teachers are certified in pediatric first aid and pediatric CPR. The staff will administer first aid if your child has a minor accident. If your child needs immediate medical attention, we will call the local ambulance service, which will transport the child to the local hospital. We will call you as soon as possible, and we will also attempt to contact your child's primary health care provider. A staff member will escort your child in the ambulance if you are not present.

Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment Form for your child must be on file with Shir Hadash ECC. This authorizes emergency care for your child and transport to a facility for treatment. The expense of emergency transportation is the sole responsibility of the parents or guardians.

Immunizations

All children enrolling in Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center must be current on their immunization schedule. Evidence to that effect will be required on the first day of enrollment and re-checked annually.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

Your child should be in good health when attending school. If your child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program, do not send them to school. As mandated in state regulations, the teachers will conduct an informal health check on each child arriving at the Center. For the protection of your child as well as the other children, they must be kept at home if they show any symptoms of illness. Children with fever, or those that have been diagnosed with any illness, may not attend the Center for a period of **24 hours** after the fever has abated and the symptoms have cleared. *(Please note that during pandemic times this period time increases to 48 hours.)* Your close observation for indicators and symptoms of illness will aid us in ensuring an environment free of contagion, thereby lessening the potential for secondary and repeat illnesses.

While a snuffle or a mild cough might not be a problem, do not send your child if there are signs of any of the following symptoms:

- Is complaining of any pain
- Has a rash accompanied by a fever
- Has discharge and redness in one or both eyes
- Has unusual redness on the cheeks of the face
- Has diarrhea or vomiting
- Runny nose that needs to be wiped frequently
- Is lethargic
- **Has a fever of 100 degrees or above**
- Shows no interest in usual activities
- Sleeps excessively
- Has chronic cough
- Soreness, irritation of the throat

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will contact you as soon as possible. The Director may determine that children must be picked up from school if they are unable to participate in school activities, if their care is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children or if the child poses a risk of harmful diseases to others. This could be due to lack of sleep, illness, distress, or any other reason. It is your responsibility to make immediate arrangements for your child to be picked up.

When possible, we will separate the ill child from the other children (under adult supervision) until the family member or authorized person arrives to take the child home. If we are unable to locate a guardian, those persons designated as *emergency contacts* will be notified to pick up the child.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHANGE ALL/ANY OF YOUR CONTACT NUMBERS WHENEVER NECESSARY. IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, THESE TELEPHONE NUMBERS ARE THE ONLY AVAILABLE MEANS OF CONTACT THAT THE CENTER HAS WITH YOU.

If your child is sent home with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, they may not return to the Center for **until they have been symptom free for 24 hours**, unless they have a physician's note stating they are healthy enough to return to preschool. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** Once a family has been alerted that their child is ill, they must pick up their child from school promptly (within 30 minutes).

To protect the health and welfare of all of the children, we will exclude, from the program, children and staff that we know or suspect have infectious illnesses or communicable conditions (such as head lice). Please help us by reporting any infectious illness or condition your child or a family member has or may have been exposed to.

Children who have or are suspected of having certain infectious illnesses or communicable conditions may not attend school until we receive written notification from a licensed physician or registered nurse that the child is not contagious and may be readmitted. The opinion of the Santa Clara County Health Dept. or a medical consultant of our choice will supersede your family practitioner's recommendation if there is a conflicting opinion as to your child's re-admission into our program.

SUN SAFETY

Our staff is committed to providing a sun safe play environment for your children. Most skin cancers, including melanoma, are caused by excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation, particularly during childhood. Good lifelong sun safety habits can be encouraged early in childhood. A broad spectrum (guarding against ultraviolet A and B) sunscreen should be applied to children in the morning to protect against harmful ultraviolet radiation. Please remember that even on a cloudy day, 85% of ultraviolet radiation still reaches the earth's surface, so sun protection needs to be performed on a daily basis. We also encourage the use of wide-brimmed hats and specialized sun protective garments. Sunscreen does not last all day and needs to be reapplied prior to exposure, so please indicate your permission to apply sunscreen on the form provided and send in a broad spectrum sunscreen of your choice with your child. Your teachers will let you know when more sunscreen is needed.

MEDICATIONS

If your child is to receive prescription medication during their day at the ECC, you must fill out a "Permission to Administer Medication" form. This form should accompany the medication (in the original container) and be submitted to your child's teacher. We suggest that when filling prescriptions, you ask your pharmacist for two prescription bottles, one for home and one for the Center. Over-the-counter medicines will be administered when the medication comes to school in the original container and a parent/guardian signs a "Permission to Administer Medication" form. Dosage and time of administration **must** be indicated on the permission form by parents/guardians

Medicines will be administered by a designated staff person and documented. If medications have been administered at home, parents/guardians are asked to notify the teacher, as a child's behavior can be affected by medication. Lip balm will be administered by a teacher and kept out of the reach of children. A "Permission to Administer Medication" form is required for lip balm type products. This policy is the same for any throat lozenges or cough drops.

Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center does not provide any specialized medical or dental care. In case of minor injuries such as a scrape, comfort and basic first aid will be administered. If additional medical treatment is required, we will contact the parent/guardian, the child's physician, or 911, as appropriate.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Each child and staff member enrolled in our program is required to have an **emergency set of clothing left at school**. This is in addition to the change of clothes for accidents. These emergency clothes must include:
Long sleeve shirt slacks or jeans jacket or sweatshirt or sweater
Underwear socks closed toe shoes (old sneakers)
Please give these to us in a bag or backpack that is zippered or fastened shut marked prominently with the child's name.

In the event of a catastrophe, Shir Hadash will implement a procedure to ensure the safety and general well being of the children within our Center.

We want to be optimally prepared. If there is a disaster that warrants our evacuation, we will post a note on the door stating the facility to which we have relocated. It will be the Los Gatos Presbyterian Church 1 block west on Shannon Rd. or Blossom Hill Park, located 1 block east on Shannon Road.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Discipline is one of the most challenging and important aspects of any preschool program. While striving to provide children with the most stimulating and ideal learning environment, the teachers seek to establish boundaries that are clear and guidelines that remain consistent. Children in the preschool years are still developing appropriate expressions of their needs and desires.

At Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center, we strive to assist children in the mastery of this skill through supervision, intervention, redirection, scripting, and proper modeling. Children are also afforded choices whenever possible to increase their sense of autonomy and cooperation. The staff further encourages children to verbalize anger and/or frustration in a manner that will produce positive and motivating results. However, if a child's behavior is destructive or uncontrollable, a conference date will be scheduled with the family and a variety of mutual expectations will be explored. As we work together to direct the children in positive ways, we are fulfilling our goal of instilling in each child the principles of responsibility, care for the community, and self-esteem.

Shir Hadash ECC will not exercise any corporal punishment and does not withhold any of the needs of the child for purposes of discipline, or for any reason, including guardian request.

Termination of services may result if a child is consistently disruptive, or requires physical restraint to keep themselves or others safe, or is unwilling or unable to actively participate in the program, or is harmful to themselves or others, or who has/needs that cannot be met within the staffing ratios of the Center.

The cardinal rule for children is: Take care of yourself, each other and our space.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

1. No corporal punishment (hitting, spanking, physical punishment) is used.
2. Cruel, severe, unusual or unnecessary punishment is not inflicted on the children.
3. Derogatory remarks will not be made to children about their families or about the children themselves.
4. No child or group of children will be allowed to discipline another child.
5. No child will be out of sight of a staff member if he/she is removed from a group for disciplinary reasons.
6. No child will be deprived of snacks or lunch for disciplinary reasons.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The State of California mandates all child care providers to report the mistreatment of children to the attention of Child Protection Services. Any suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child will be reported in accordance with California Laws.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

We are committed to respecting the privacy of your child's records. Within the Center, only your child's teacher, the Director and the child's parents or legal guardian may see the records. Unless required by applicable law or requested by a governmental authority and permitted by law, we will not disclose information relating to your child to anyone else without parental/legal guardian consent. Also, we will not verify your child's enrollment without your consent, and we will verify enrollment only in writing and not by telephone.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

It is the desire of the Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center to offer a quality early childhood program to as many children of our synagogue and the local community as possible. We strive to meet every child where they are in their development.

Families wishing to enroll their child who has a diagnosed or suspected disability, disorder, developmental delay or other special need in Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center are requested to have their child's case worker or therapist(s) visit our school to evaluate the school's ability to meet the prospective student's needs. We encourage openness and communication about any identified or suspected special need.

If, during a school year, the classroom teachers and the Director feel a child's needs are not being met in the current classroom environment, Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center reserves the right to require a professional screening to determine how best to help the child in their growth and development. It is the family's responsibility to obtain an appropriate services team and to bear the financial burden of the services.

We reserve the right to terminate the enrollment of a child whose behavior, learning needs or physical needs would be better served in a different setting.

LUNCHES

When packing your child's lunch, please keep in mind that pork products of any kind and shellfish are not permitted in the synagogue. Lunch may not contain meat or poultry products. **Please check the ingredients of all foods your children bring to school and make every effort to not send in any food with peanuts, tree nuts, peanut oil, or that may contain traces of nuts.**

During Passover, we strictly observe the dietary laws of the holiday. When school is in session during Passover, do not send in any bread or yeast products (cookies, cake, crackers, etc.). A detailed letter listing appropriate foods will be sent home as the holiday approaches.

Lunches should be packed in reusable lunch containers marked with your child's name. Since we are not able to refrigerate lunches due to limited refrigerator space, we request that you pack your child's perishable lunch with an ice pack each day. We will warm up lunches in the microwave.

Lunch suggestions:

rice with vegetables	tofu
pasta and sauce, butter, or veggies	yogurt
cheese sandwiches	bagel and cream cheese
cottage cheese	tuna
hard-boiled egg	egg salad

salmon or other fish
cheese or veggie pizza
baked potato with topping
cereal and milk

vegetable soup
fish sticks

SNACKS

A snack, including a beverage of water (juice on Fridays) is served daily. Menus are posted on the family information bulletin board and on ParentSquare.

Please advise the staff if your child has or develops food allergies. If your child has special dietary needs, you may be asked to provide your child's alternative food. Such food should be sent in a storage container labeled with your child's name and classroom. Children will not be permitted to bring food items into the Center, unless they are in labeled containers. Teachers will provide these snack items and at designated meal times.

The Preschool will provide snacks at the following times:

1. A mid-morning snack, including a beverage of water or juice,, will be provided between 10 am and 11 am (depending on the classroom schedule).
2. An afternoon snack plus beverage will be provided around 3:30 to those children that stay in the afternoons. We offer a light snack at 5:15 to those children enrolled in extended care.
3. Children attending Early Drop-off may bring breakfast to school. It needs to be consumed by 8:15 am.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Please advise the staff if your child has or develops food allergies

Our preschool is a “**food allergy aware**” facility. At the beginning of the school year we educate teachers and staff about the risk of anaphylaxis due to food allergies.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, families of a food allergic child will be asked to submit an individual food allergy action plan. In some cases, we may ask the food allergic child’s family to supply their child’s “safe” snacks.

All children with a history of food allergies will be required to supply 2 Epi-pens - one to accompany the child (in the classroom, on the playground, etc.) and one to keep in the preschool office.

Some students in our school have life-threatening allergies to all nuts. To help create a safe environment for these children, this policy prohibits nuts in the preschool portion of the building during preschool hours. In a school setting, cross-contamination is a great risk for food allergic children. Even a few crumbs, a smidgen of peanut butter, a stray peanut shell, or dust from nuts can set off an anaphylactic reaction.

In an effort to minimize the risk, we ask that all food brought from home by all children in the Center be nut-free. This includes birthday treats, Shabbat snacks, and cooking projects inside the classroom. You may receive further instructions from your child’s teacher. **Please check the ingredients of all foods your children bring to school and make every effort to not send in any food with peanuts, tree nuts, peanut oil, or that may contain traces of nuts.** If you have any questions or need suggestions about what to bring, please contact the preschool office or your child’s teacher.

BIRTHDAYS

Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays in the classroom. We want this day to be special for your child. Please talk to your teacher about how birthdays are celebrated in your child's classroom.

1. On your child's birthday, you are encouraged to donate a favorite book, which will become a part of the classroom library, or an age appropriate puzzle or game. If your child's birthday falls during the summer months, you may celebrate their half birthday at school.
2. We discourage the addition of party hats or favors for the class.
3. Invitations for parties held outside of school should be sent through the mail or via email, especially when every child from the class is not invited.

SPECIAL DAYS

During the school year, we celebrate many special days, such as Earth Day, Thanksgiving and of course all of the Jewish holidays. **We do not, however, celebrate Halloween, Valentine's Day or St. Patrick's Day.** Please do not send any Valentine's Day cards to school. They will not be distributed.

FIELD TRIPS

An important part of the Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center's curriculum is exposing the children to many and varied experiences; therefore a number of field trips are built into the school year. **If you do not want your child to attend the off-campus activity, fail to bring your child's car seat, or arrive after the departure time, your child will not be provided child care services on that day, and there will be no refund of tuition.** Children in our two year old class usually do not go on field trips, however, the class is invited on the school-wide trip to the pumpkin patch if each child had an adult able to join us.

Families will receive a permission slip in advance of each field trip. Permission slips must be signed and returned in order for a child to participate in the trip. Using chaperones and staff members, the ratio of adults to children on most trips will be 1:2. The trip will not be held if we do not have a proper amount of chaperones and/or drivers. Family drivers are required to carry only the number of people that can be buckled into individual child safety seats with seat belts and must have current insurance coverage. We request that adults carry their cell phones with them on the trip. Children may not be transported in the front seat of a car. Under California law, children less than 60 pounds must be secured in a seat belt system with the appropriate child seat. The adults are responsible for providing or otherwise ensuring that their children have appropriate seats and are secured properly in the vehicles. If a younger sibling attends a trip, that adult will be responsible for their children only.

TOILET TRAINING

Most children are developmentally ready to begin toilet training between the ages of two and a half and three and a half, however each child does develop at their own rate. Our toilet training policy has been developed with consideration for our children and years of experience. If your child is wearing diapers, diapers and wipes must be supplied to us. Please label these items with your child's name. We will notify you when we need the diapers or wipes replenished. Failure to supply diapers and/or wipes will result in a penalty charge of **\$25.00** for each week the Center supplies your child with additional items.

When you are ready to start the potty training process, please contact your teacher and work together to develop a plan for your child before sending your child to school in underpants.

1. Children do not need to be potty trained at any time in their 2-year-old class. We change diapers when your child has a bowel movement, is wet, before lunch, and before and after rest time for 2-year-olds staying past 1:00 pm. Before your child is successfully trained, please use diapers **only**.
2. You are responsible to bring diapers and wipes at the beginning of the week for the full week of your child's enrollment. Pull-ups confuse some children. They often have trouble distinguishing between a pull-up and a diaper and use a pull-up as they would use a diaper. This will delay toilet training.
3. Children should be sent to school in underpants only after they have had two successful dry days in a row at home. Please be realistic about your child's ability to use the potty when sending them to school in underpants. It is very important that your child be able to verbalize their need to use the toilet in order to be

successful at school. Sitting your child on the toilet to "catch them" does not mean that they are trained or ready. Please understand that we do not have the luxury of time to "catch the moment" with your child. It is helpful to notify your teacher and discuss the toilet training experience in advance of your child's attempting to use the toilet at school.

4. Occasionally children in the process of toilet training have a setback when a new baby arrives or another family event happens to upset the family routine. Please do not be discouraged. You can attempt toilet training in a few weeks when your routine is re-established.
5. Once your child is wearing underpants, your child needs to show consistency in using the bathroom at school. We understand that accidents do happen and we are prepared to deal with them in a loving way. However, if your child has more accidents than successes we will need to reconsider whether underpants are still appropriate for school.
6. We will take newly toilet-trained children to the bathroom frequently; however, do not be alarmed if they are not as successful at school as they are at home.
7. Children must be dressed in clothing that is easily taken on and off. Jumpsuits, overalls, onesies, belts and suspender-type clothing are not appropriate. Elastic waistbands instead of snaps and zippers are easier for your child to manage. We want your child to learn to help him/herself and the easier the clothes are to use, the quicker that will happen.
8. It is best to attempt the toilet training process over a weekend when your family has very few social engagements. This process should be stress-free and if many accidents occur, try on another weekend. When you feel your child can be successful at school, please send in a few changes of clothes and extra underpants. Please place these in a labeled plastic bag. It is very disconcerting for a child to borrow someone else's clothes.
9. The teachers and director and assistant director are available to answer questions. All of us have been through this experience many times and are able to make many kinds of suggestions. Just try to make this process low-key and keep smiling.
10. We strongly encourage children to be toilet trained in their third year, but do not require a child to be toilet trained to move into a mixed age class.
11. Children in TK are required to be fully potty trained unless there are special circumstances.

CLOTHING

In addition to being comfortable and appropriate for the weather, school clothing should be easy for the child to manage and completely washable. Please do not dress your child in valuable clothing that cannot be replaced. We are not responsible for ruined garments.

We encourage pants with elastic waistbands. One-piece suits and overalls make it difficult for the child to become independent in dressing. Belts are extremely difficult for the very young to manipulate. Long skirts are difficult to run and climb in.

Please send your child to school in rubber-soled shoes. They are safer for climbing on the playground. Please use your judgment when sending your child to school in flip flops. Some children manage that type of shoe very successfully while others struggle to keep that style of shoe on their feet.

Articles of clothing such as coats, jackets, hats and gloves must be labeled with your child's name. We are not responsible for lost or misplaced clothing. Lost and found articles are located in a basket in the preschool lobby.

********* Each child is to bring a complete set of clothing, including socks, to school in a labeled zip-lock plastic bag. Please have each piece clearly marked with the child's name. These clothes will be used if there is a toileting mishap or play experience that requires a change. Please check your child's cubby periodically to see that it is complete with clothes appropriate to the season and your child's growth.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important part of your child's day and total health. As long as conditions are safe, the children will play outdoors each day. We like to explore the outdoors when it is gently raining or after it has rained. We encourage boots and raincoats on rainy days. All children who are well enough to be at school, will be expected to participate in outdoor play. You can help your child enjoy this time outdoors by being sure that they are dressed for the existing weather conditions.

Children are not required to wear shoes in their classrooms or on the sand yard. As long as conditions are safe, we allow them the bodily autonomy to choose whether they would like to wear jackets and coats.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Toys should remain at home. Please assure your child that those toys are for home use and that at school, there are special toys and activities. If a younger child needs a special article for security, please discuss this with the teacher. Candy and gum may not be brought to school. Children may not have lip gloss or lip stick in their possession at school. Lip balm is permitted with a "Permission to Administer Medicine" form and will be administered by a teacher and kept out of the reach of children.

STAFF OUTSIDE WORK POLICY

Teachers and staff of Shir Hadash Early Childhood Center are not permitted to babysit or do other work for families who have children currently enrolled in the Early Childhood Center. The Director may have a list of babysitters who are affiliated with the Congregation.

TEACHER GIFTS

It often falls to room volunteers to coordinate any Hanukkah or end-of-year gifts that classes may wish to give the teachers. The contributions to these gifts should be voluntary only and are not required. If families want to give a group gift, keep in mind the principle of 'derek erez' (respectful concern for others) by which the Shir Hadash community seeks to abide. Please do not comment on how much a family can afford to contribute toward a group gift. Instead make the collections modest and in a manner which every family can be proud to participate in.

YEARLY EVENTS AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SHABBAT

You may choose a date on which your child will be the Shabbat helper. They will help with the hakafah and blessings during the preschool Shabbat service. Families are invited to join us for our celebration. Many families choose a Friday near their child's birthday, but you are able to choose any day that is available-a list is posted outside the classroom door. On Friday, the children are encouraged to bring in "Tzedakah" (coins for charity).

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Special Programs are planned throughout the school year. Many of our programs depend on volunteers to be successful. Please look at the calendar at the beginning of this handbook and take note of the Thanksgiving Feast and Chanukah, Purim, and End-of-Year celebrations as days we need volunteers. Family help is needed for Chanukah and Purim baking projects and for construction of Purim piñatas.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Back to School Night is an opportunity to visit your child's classroom to learn about the types of activities your child will take part in each day. Please check your school calendar for exact dates.

SUMMER PROGRAM

A summer program is held during the summer months for 8 weeks. A letter and registration information will be sent home in March to give you dates, times and more information. Registration is on a first come, first served basis with congregants and currently enrolled preschool children given priority.