



## **Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion Pre-School Handbook**

Dear Parents,

Going to preschool is one of the most important milestones in a child's life. At the same time, it is a milestone in the life of his/her parents as well, particularly if it is your first child entering school.

This Pre- School handbook has been prepared to help you and your child acclimate to the school surroundings and assure that your child is in the hands of warm, professional, caring, experienced, and sensitive teachers.

We have taken the liberty to include some words of advice in addition to outline of Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion's early childhood policies. Please keep it handy and refer to it as needed.

Nothing, of course, takes the place of direct contact between parents and the school. Parents are invited to call the office to discuss any questions or uncertainties regarding their child's preschool experience.

We look forward to a wonderful preschool experience together.

Sincerely,

*Minah Kamin*

Minah Kamin

Pre-School Director

- The Preschool Day begins at 8:45 a.m. Children arriving before 8:45 may be subject to early stay fees. The front doors are locked throughout the school day, however between 8:45 a.m and 9:00 a.m. the doors are unlocked. **It is of greatest importance for the safety of your child, that the adult bringing him/her to school, be responsible to “hand over” the child to an adult. Do not assume that your child arrived safely into the building by allowing him/her to enter on his own.**
- Nursery children are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday.
- Kindergarten children are dismissed at 3:30 p.m. Monday thru Thursday.
- Friday dismissal is at 1:30 the entire year for all preschool classes.

## Getting Ready for School

Readiness for school means much more than having a new dress, shoes or outfit for that first day of school! In order for a child to be happy and successful in school, he/she must be ready physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively.

There are many ways in which you can help your child get ready for school. The sections which follow will outline some of them.

# Physical Readiness

Before the child is ready for school, it is important that he/she receive a complete and thorough medical and dental examination.

Children attending YST Preschool must be toilet trained. We encourage children to come to school in underwear rather than Pull-Ups. The teachers are patient and understanding of young children's bathroom needs.

## Vaccinations and Immunizations

The State law requires that all children present evidence of immunization against a number of diseases: diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, smallpox, polio, measles, German measles, mumps, typhoid fever and T.B. In addition, your child should get periodic boosters to maintain immunity to the various diseases. Medical forms are available on the Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion website. The form must be returned to the office before the beginning of school.

As of September 2019, Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion does not recognize the "religious exemption" to NJ Board of Health requirements.

Every child in the preschool must receive a flu immunization no later than December 31. This is a state mandate and the school must have notification from the doctor who administered the shot.

All health information that is shared with the office staff and/or teacher will remain completely confidential. We ask your full cooperation in sharing with us any health issues related to your child. In case of any emergency, knowing about food allergies, medicine allergies or any deficiencies or concerns (even if there are no symptoms) is of utmost importance.

## Health Habits

The foundation for health is laid in the first six years of a child's life. A healthy child has the best chance of growing into a healthy adult. Teaching good health habits

that are done without conscious effort, is one of the first duties of good parenting.

Some of the health habits which we reinforce within our environment are:

- Eating the right kinds of food. Help us train your child in good nutrition habits by sending healthful snacks to school. We provide a healthy fruit or vegetable snack in the afternoon.
- Washing hands before eating and after using the bathroom. This step in physical hygiene is crucial in curbing the spread of pin-worms, and other communicable diseases, among preschoolers. If your child is diagnosed with pin-worms, please let the school know so that we can be doubly vigilant in encouraging this important health habit.
- No sharing of brushes, hair ornaments, yarmulkes or other headgear. This precaution is essential in keeping head lice in check. Again, if your child is infected, please let the school know immediately.
- Keeping pencils, the wood chips that are in the playground, and other foreign objects out of the mouth, nose and ears.
- Your child may be sent home if he/she appears to have symptoms of illness during the day. In such cases, he/she is immediately isolated from the other children until the parent is contacted.

## **SOCIAL READINESS**

Social readiness for school implies that your child has achieved certain personal skills and habits which make it possible for him/her to be on his/her own and to be accepted as a member of a group. You can help your child to develop social readiness by teaching him/her to do such things as the following:

Dress and undress himself/herself.

Attend to his/her bathroom needs.

Be tidy while eating.

Meet adults and peers with ease.  
Care for his/her own property.  
Put away toys when not needed.  
Share toys and take turns.  
Be polite.  
Perform certain home chores regularly.  
Know his/her full name.  
Know where father and/or mother work.  
Know how to distinguish between a new person in their life and a "stranger."  
Know to avoid accepting food, gifts or a ride from a stranger.

## **EMOTIONAL READINESS**

The three and four year old child is a very sensitive individual and how he/she feels about himself/herself and other people affects the way in which he/she gets along in school.

You can help your child develop an emotional readiness for school by such means as the following:

- \* Give your child opportunities to be independent.
- \* Provide opportunities for him/her to play with other children.
- \* Encourage him/her to make short visits away from home without either parent.
- \* Assure him/her that school is a friendly and happy place to be.
- \* Avoid comparing him/her with other children. Help him/her build self-confidence.
- \* Do not expect him/her to do more than his/her rate of growth will permit; do not force him/her to do the impossible for his/her maturity.
- \* Praise him/her for tasks well done.
- \* Treat his/her ideas with respect and consider his/her opinions in family plans that affect the child.
- \* Help him/her to understand that one cannot always win or have his/her own way.
- \* Above all, be consistent!!

# READINESS FOR LEARNING

Readiness for both reading and writing is dependent upon the child's maturity. Children's cognitive abilities mature at different rates, just as do other childhood milestones such as cutting teeth, walking, and talking.

To help your child build this readiness, here are some suggestions:

- \* Read to your child; it develops their listening skills and increases his/her vocabulary
- \* Let your child tell original stories to you or repeat stories that you have read together.
- \* Offer your child different kinds of experiences; a trip to the zoo, the airport, a farm, a train ride, etc.
- \* Encourage your child to talk about things he/she does and sees.
- \* Speak to your child in sentences; encourage him/her to use full sentences and clear speech.
- \* Provide opportunities for your child to sing, to hop, skip, march and jump in time to music.
- \* Allow your child to help you buy groceries - to become aware of sizes, weights and concepts of money.

## Snacks and Birthday Parties

All food products brought to school must carry widely accepted kashrus supervision, e.g. OU, OK, Star-K, Kof K.

Gum, hard candies, chewy candies (e.g.: taffies, sour sticks, etc.) are prohibited.

No "pekalach" are allowed for birthday parties; birthdays can be celebrated by purchasing items for the classroom, such as a book, music CD or toy that the children will enjoy. The child will be very proud of the gift that was given for his/her birthday. Suggested treats/snacks for birthday parties include Tofutti cuties, potato chips, tortilla chips, corn pops, and nut free cakes/cupcakes.

We are a nut free school. Granola bars that contain nuts, snack mixes with nuts and/or peanuts, Bamba or any item that has traces of nuts are prohibited.

## **Suggested School Snacks**

- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Dried fruit (i.e. raisins, apricots, etc.)
- Tam Tams, crackers, melba toast, rice cakes
- Plain pretzels, breadsticks
- Applesauce, light jello
- Animal crackers, graham crackers, biscuits
- Puffed snacks, soy crisps, baked chips, air-popped popcorn
- Fruit leathers, gems or non-high fructose corn syrup sweets
- Yogurt, cheese sticks, etc.
- Whole grain cereal, protein bars, granola bars
- Water, seltzer, milk or pure fruit juice

## **Important**

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick the child up. We must have written authorization or a phone call placed to the school for changes in this respect.

Should you need to pick your child up before dismissal, we ask that you call the preschool before you come. We will be happy to have your child ready for your pickup.

### **Keep your Child Home....**

- \* If he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24-hour period.
- \* If he/she has a heavy nasal discharge.
- \* If he/she has a constant cough.

- \* If he/she has a discharge from the eye.
- \* If he/she has a suspicious rash.
- \* If he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally out of sorts.  
Rest at such times may prevent the development of an oncoming illness.
- \* Please notify the school if your child does have a communicable disease.

Medication should be given at home, if at all possible. If it is necessary to send any prescription medication to school, the classroom teacher must have a signed request from the parent indicating the

1. Child's Name
2. Name of Medication
3. Dosage
4. Appropriate time to administer the medicine.

**Please Note:** Most pharmacies will make up a special bottle for school dosages, if you so request. This eliminates the necessity of sending medicine to and from school daily.

### **Safety Habits:**

Teaching your child safe behavior is part of getting him/her ready for school. Accidents are the greatest single threat to children's lives and physical health. To guard your child's health, teach him to do safely the things he does at home, at school and at play. We encourage you to teach your children not to touch electrical outlets or plug things in by themselves at a young preschool age. Children should know not to run into the street, touch things that are hot or sharp and not wander away from their parent, teacher or their class. If he/she has formed the habit of practicing simple safety rules, he/she will be ready to manage and look out for his/her own safety in many situations.

- All children should wear socks.
- No open sandals, please.
- Finally, think of our collection of unlabeled, unclaimed clothing - and put labels on all outer garments, including hats and boots, as well as your child's lunch box and knapsack.

- Start your child off to school in a happy frame of mind. Show interest in what he/she does in school and what he/she is learning.
- Encourage communication!! Let your child talk about what he/she did without pressuring him/her.
- Get to know your child's teacher and help her to understand some of the experiences the child has had that may affect his/her success in school.

Please provide a complete change of winter clothing and summer clothing that is labeled with his/her name. Different situations arise that may require that we change your child. Children are always most comfortable in their own clothing.

### **Make School a Happy Experience!!**

See that your child gets up on time and eats a good breakfast.

Think of the child's comfort - and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. We prefer shoes without laces, as long untied laces may cause the child to trip or fall.

Think of the messy art materials and other messy activities - and provide clothing that is washable.

Think of our play areas - and provide clothing that is sturdy.

Think of the changeable autumn and spring weather and dress your child warmly. Provide sweaters even on the first sunny fall days. It is much easier to remove an unneeded item than to put on something they don't have. A light sweater should be worn under raincoats.

We are partners with parents in the preschool education. Communicate your thoughts and comments with the administration. Share with us about the growth you see in your child. Teachers will surely let you know about the progress and growth of your preschooler. Remember, our goals are identical - a happy child in a safe and happy environment!