GAN ISRAEL PRESCHOOL

Introduction

Dear Parents,

Shalom and welcome to Gan Israel Preschool! We are so glad you have chosen our school as a 'home away from home" for your child! We are absolutely committed to creating an exciting, warm and friendly, educational environment; one that nurtures your child's unique style and needs.



We encourage your child to explore the world, learn to be part of a group, and solve problems in a constructive manner. Learning at our school is self- rewarding, joyous, and non competitive.

As you and your child are about to embark on this special journey ,we want to assure you that we will be there every step of the way to insure maximal success and growth. The information included in this handbook is important; take the time to read it to familiarize yourself with the administrative rules and procedures that foster happy and successful times.

Please understand that the purpose of this handbook is to provide you with easy access to information you may need; however, this handbook is NOT meant to replace personal contact between parents and staff. Call, e-mail, visit – a lot! You and your family are the reason we are here!

Join us in sharing the gifts of love of kids and love of Judaism . In this way – together - we can and we will succeed in this important and exciting undertaking!

May we all go from strength to strength.







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The activities are planned to emphasize process over product and as much individualization as possible.

Mission Statement

Gan Israel Preschool was founded to provide preschool age children with a supportive and loving environment that encourages and builds their confidence in being Jewish while providing them with the physical, social, emotional and academic building blocks for lifelong learning, respect for others and themselves.

Mission Statement Applications

Introduction:

- The variety of daily activities for all age groups will be fun age and stage appropriate and provide opportunities for teacher-directed, self-directed, and self-chosen play, tasks and activities; a balance of active and quiet play and activities; individual and group play and activities and curiosity and safe exploration. The activities are planned to emphasize process over product and as much individualization as possible. Children will be encouraged to rest or participate as individually appropriate. Children will be appreciated, nourished, and nurtured – all in the warmth of a Jewish environment.
- All custodial parents are welcome to visit at any time during the school day as stated in 63.2-1813 of the Code of Virginia, and parents' involvement in Gan Israel Preschool activities is encouraged and planned into the program. Watch for e-mail and flyers!
- School activities will not be scheduled on Shabbat or Yom Tov (Jewish holidays), or at a time when participants may reasonably be involved in preparation or travel for Shabbat or Yom Tov, school business will not be conducted on Shabbat or Yom Tov, and the school will not distribute or allow distribution of information about activities scheduled on either Shabbat or Yom Tov.



We love our playground. Please send a warm jacket, hat, and mittens every day during the winter months.

School Tuition

There is a \$50.00 nonrefundable fee when sending in an application to our school. The balance of the tuition is to be paid in a single installment or in three installments due on June 1, December 1, and March 1 or in 10 monthly installments. Head checks for payment dates are required, along with a credit card number to keep on file. Tuition reserves your child's space in school. A month's notice, in writing, is required if you wish to withdraw your child from the pre-school. At that time you may be eligible to receive a refund of unused tuition minus the application fee.

PLEASE NOTE: TUTION RESERVES YOUR CHILD'S SPACE IN THE SCHOOL. REFUNDS OR CREDIT'S WILL NOT BE GIVEN FOR ILLNESS, HOLIDAYS, VACA-TIONS, ETC. AND THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP DAYS OR SUBSTITUTION DAYS.

School Year Calendar

In general, Gan Israel Preschool follows the September – June schedule of the Fairfax County Public Schools (with exceptions, of course, for the Jewish holidays). School closings follow Fairfax County Public Schools. **On days when Fairfax County has a late school start, our preschool will also have a late start.** One or two hour late starts for Fairfax County schools result in preschool beginning 1 hour later at 10:00. If morning care is needed on late start days, please speak to the director about this. On late start days, preschool dismissal is at its regular time. Emergency closings that occur during the school day will be independently scheduled by Gan Israel Preschool and parents will be reached by phone. A school calendar is included as an appendix to this handbook.

School Day - General

• The daily schedule will be posted and will allow for flexibility as children's individual needs require. The daily schedule will include opportunities for Judaic learning and practice, at least 30 minutes of outdoor play (weather allowing), snack and lunch, small and large motor activities, language and communication experiences, sensory experiences, art and music/movement activities, play acting and social living. Language development in both Hebrew and English will be encouraged by expanding students' language through prayer, personal conversations (giving children time to both initiate and respond), and labeling and describing objects and events. A sample daily schedule is included as an appendix to this handbook.

• State regulations require daily attendance to be completed accurately each day. Please do not take your child without signing out so the school has an accurate accounting for your child. State regulations require a report to the Child Care Council as soon as practicable but not to exceed one working day of the circumstance surrounding a death or missing child if authorities have been contacted for help. Should either of those dire situations occur, Rabbi Deitsch will report to the parent(s) either in person or by phone and write a report for the file.

• Please dress your child for active play and for fun, messy projects everyday. We will be outside everyday that the weather permits so jackets, hats and mittens are a necessity all winter long (and snow pants and boots when the ground is wet).

• Please send a complete change of labeled clothing in a labeled plastic bag (accidents happen). Please update this as the seasons change and your child grows.



Preschool days are busy days. Arrival: 8:45 - 9:00 Dismissal: 12:50

School Day - Arrival

• Arrival for students is at 9:00 AM. Students are walked to the preschool by parents where teachers greet them, and the daily health check can begin. Parents should accompany their children to wash their hands before coming into the class-room.

• Arrival ends around 9:15 AM, and the front door is then locked so it can be left unattended. Students arriving after that time, will be walked to the preschool by parents who will ring the bell for access, and be let in by an available staff member who will greet the child, perform a daily health check on the child, supervise the parent sign-in of the child, and accompany the child to class. In order to help children adjust to their new environment, we ask that parents not prolong their good-byes.

• Class begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 12:50 PM. Please call our office to find out about optional rest/nap and aftercare. Students not picked up by 1:00 will be brought to the aftercare program. A late fee of \$10 will be charged, and then aftercare fees will be charged.

School Day - Dismissal

• **Dismissal time is at 12:50**. Parents come to the preschool to retrieve children for dismissals. Beginning at 12:50, once a parent has arrived at school, the parent is responsible for the supervision and safety of his/her child. PLEASE NOTE: Routine pick-up is according to contract. Certainly traffic tie-ups and other mishaps occur. However, please remember that your child is anticipating your arrival, and please make every attempt to be on time for your child.

• Students not picked up by 1:00 will be brought to the aftercare program. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged plus the cost aftercare (with the clock in the preschool office area serving as the "official time"). Students will be under the supervision of the aftercare teacher. Child Protective Services will be contacted regarding a child who is not picked up at all by the end of the day (by 5:30 P.M.)

• No child will be released to a person not authorized for pick-up by a parent/ guardian. Written authorization for any changes in this regard is required.

Kashrut

Gan Israel Preschool is committed to upholding strict standards of Kashrut. The mixing of milk and meat is prohibited. Individual lunches and snacks brought from home must be dairy or Pareve. Faculty monitors compliance with Kashrut standards. Kashrut questions should be directed to Rabbi Deitsch.

- Home baked or cooked or otherwise prepared at home food may not be brought to school for class use (including treats to celebrate student birthdays).
- All food items brought into the school for class use must be sealed and have a label indicating that the product is Kosher. In general, approved certification include: *circle U, circle K, Star K, and Kof K*.
- Additionally, all dairy items brought into the school for class use must be labeled Cholov Israel, and all baked items must be Pas Yisrael.
- Food to be served at special class events must be prepared on site.

Discipline of Students



Classroom management techniques recognize that each child is a unique individual who develops at an individual bace. Discipline at Gan Israel Preschool is based on "Derech Eretz" (acting honorably and with caring). The goal is for Gan Israel Preshool to be a friendly and family like and a safe environment. Classroom management may appear to be different for each faculty member. However, some discipline constants include:

•The children are actively supervised at all times;

- •Rules are few and clearly stated, such as You may not hit others for any reason;
- •No corporal punishment is used ever;

•Classroom management techniques recognize that each child is a unique individual who behaves and learns in different ways and who is developing at an individual pace;

•Classroom management techniques are based on re-directing to interrupt an inappropriate behavior as opposed to punishing. *Sit and watch* may be used after other management techniques have been tried with unsuccessful results. During *sit and watch*, the child sits on a chair in sight of the teacher for a short amount of time. In rare cases, a child will be escorted to the office for a calming period with one adult.

•The school strives to help the child become self-controlled by helping him/her to experience the intrinsic pleasure in appropriate behavior as opposed to behaving just to please adults;

•Whenever possible, expectations are stated in the positive form, such as *Please Walk* rather than *Don't Run;*

•Staff members address the behavior, not the child's attributes (For example: Hitting hurts others. Let's find another way to solve this problem; as opposed to Bad boys/girls hit!)

•If necessary, in order to prevent a child from hurting himself/herself or others a staff member may calmly but firmly hold a child to prevent harm. The child will be held as lovingly as possible with a helpful attitude rather than a punishing or admonishing one.

• Additionally, staff follows the behavioral guidance listed below from the Virginia Code: Behavioral guidance from section 22 VAC 15-30-484 state "In order to promote the child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social well-being and growth, staff shall interact with the child and one another to provide needed help, comfort support and:

- 1. Respect personal privacy;
- 2. Respect differences in cultural, ethnic and family backgrounds;
- 3. Encourage decision making abilities;
- 4. Promote ways of getting along;
- 5. Encourage independence and self-direction; and
- 6. Use consistency in applying expectations.

Behavioral guidance shall be constructive in nature, age and stage appropriate, and shall be intended to redirect children to appropriate behavior and resolve conflicts."

Children with consistent behavior difficulties at Gan Israel Preschool are taken through the above procedures, and parents are advised and counseled on the phone, in writing or in person. Should a child appear to not be benefiting from the Gan Israel program promoting safety for him/her and others, we will communicate that to parents by phone and/or in writing and/or in person; and in rare cases, we may suggest that a more suitable educational setting be found for the safety of all the children.

Toilet Training

If your child wears a diaper please send a pack of diapers and wipes that will remain at school. You will be notified by the teacher when the supply is running low. Only disposable diapers will be used at preschool.

When children show signs that they are ready to toilet train (knowing when they need to go, can pull pants up and down, has language to express need to go etc) teachers and parents will communicate to ensure a smooth transition. Pull ups may be required if children are experiencing multiple accidents during the training process.



We are proud to be Virginia State Licensed.

Food and Drink for Students

Kosher morning snack will take place around 10:00 AM. A weekly menu of the dry snacks will be posted, and the types of food provided may include: crackers, cereal, pretzels, etc. On Mondays, the Fruit Family is required to send in a week's worth of fresh produce that will be distributed at snack time through the week. The Fruit Family schedule and suggestions will be emailed to the parents in August. The snack menu may be revised at any time due to allergy notices. Sugary, processed treats will only be served at birthday celebrations and special events. Appropriate blessings will be made.

Lunch will begin around 12:15, and staff will sit with children during meals. According to VA law for preschools, lunches need to be labeled with your child's name and the date to ensure that each day a fresh lunch is put in the lunchbox. A simple way to do this is by sticking a piece of masking tape everyday (with your child's name and date) onto the lunch box. We know this will take an extra minute in your mornings so we are thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Lunches from home will be checked for student names to make sure each child eats the correct lunch, and uneaten lunch items will be discarded (or returned to parent daily if you request it). Gan Israel Prechool will also have on hand extra snack and lunch food in case a student forgets or has a spoiled lunch or a lunch which is too small for his/her needs, but that food cannot be guaranteed to be your child's favorites. Lunch will be preceded by HaMotzi and followed by Birchat Ha'Mazon. Special attention will be given to adequate water intake at snack and lunch and other times in the day in environments of 80 degrees or above.

Security for Students

• Adult purses will be kept safely out of sight and reach of students to ensure potentially harmful contents are not available to students.

• Doors and windows will remain secured unless under the direct sight and supervision of a staff member for a short time and an obvious reason (exiting, special activity, etc.).

• Persons not parents and not staff will never have unsupervised access to students and will not enter the restroom area while in use by children.

Children in the bathroom unaccompanied will be checked after 5 minutes.

Administration of Medication to Students

At orientation, one staff member will be designated to supervise and dispense medication. That person will control the key to the locked medication container, log in medication when brought by parents, and dispense according to directions. Should that person have a planned or unplanned absence, he or she will designate another staff member to supervise and dispense medication. You will be given that person's name on the first day of school. All staff who dispense prescriptive medication will have attended an 8 hour Medication Administration Training course.

GENERAL RULES:

- Medications must be in original containers with child's name and instructions;
- Empty containers will be returned to parents;
- Medications will not be transferred from one container to another;
- If medication needs to be refrigerated, it will be stored in a clearly defined area away from food;
- ALL (faculty and students') medications will be kept in a locked place that prevents access by children;



Your child's safety is our utmost priority. Staff will be trained in CPR and basic first aid. • If tablets are to be divided (half or quarter), they must be divided by the parents or guardian and provided to school staff. ACCORDING TO THE VA. CODE STAFF MAY NOT DIVIDE MEDICINE.

• Ointments or creams will never be applied to a wound unless specifically sent in by the parent with specific instructions. Wounds will be cleansed with just soap and water and a band-aide may be applied.

• Please complete the medication authorization form (enclosed in the packet of forms, additional forms can be requested from your child's teacher,) when sending medication with your child to school.

Child Abuse or Neglect of Students

The Law of the Commonwealth of Virginia requires that school personnel report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the designated authorities (school personnel are mandated reporters – that means they have no choice in the matter if they have suspicions of neglect or abuse.) "Any suspected incident of child abuse will be reported in accordance with section 63.1-248.3 of the Code of Virginia."

Accidents, Injuries, or Illnesses to Students

Your child's health and safety is important to us. Strong supervision helps to reduce the number of accidents or injuries at any school. However, they can never be eliminated totally. All staff hired before the first day of school has completed CPR training and basic first aid training. Should new staff members be needed after the first day, they will be CPR and first aid trained as soon as possible.

Should an injury or an emergency occur, faculty will attempt to contact parents first, then contact emergency contacts in the order in which they are listed on the form parents complete, and then call or take the child to an emergency treatment. Should the injury or illness be considered life threatening, in the opinion of the staff, 911 will be called prior to contacting the parents.

We trust your judgment when to send your child to school and when to keep him/her home. However, here are some proven guidelines from the VA code to help you determine when to keep your child home. Students may not stay at school if they arrive with:

- Temperature over 100 degrees F
- Recurrent vomiting or diarrhea
- As recommended on the Virginia Department of Health's current communicable disease chart (which hangs in school office area and is included as an appendix to this handbook)
- If your child has been ill, your child may return to school when:

* he/she has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours (if antibiotics have been prescribed)

- * he/she is fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours
- * he/she has had no diarrhea for 24 hours
- * he/she has had no vomiting for 24 hours
- * he/she is able to participate in all class activities

If your child has a rash, s/he will be unable to stay at school unless a accompanied by a doctor's note confirming that it is not contagious.

However, unexpected daytime illness does occur. Should a child require life affecting treatment 911 would be called immediately. If a child becomes ill with what appears to be a routine illness, he or she will be removed from the general group and accompanied by an adult to the office area to rest on a mat while the



We love to celebrate Jewish Holidays experientially. Please join us for the Family Events listed in the school calendar. parent is called. If parent(s) cannot be reached in a reasonable amount of time (about 15 minutes), person(s) on the emergency contact form will be called in the order in which they are listed. An adult stays with the ill child at all times.

If a student has been exposed to a communicable disease while at Gan Israel Preschool, the parent will be informed in writing.

Parents are also required to inform the school if any household member has become ill with one of the reportable communicable diseases listed in an appendix to the handbook. (This way, the teachers will be made aware of a disease your child may be susceptible to at home and will be on the lookout for any symptoms appearing in your child, G-d Forbid).

Record Keeping for Students

In general, student records are open to all staff. Without permission of the Director, no one who is not on the staff – including volunteers – may have access to student information with the exception of the emergency information contained in the portable first aid bag, and the in/out log that parents must sign. However, *22 VAC 15-30-70 STATES "Children's records shall be made available to the custodial parent on request." We ask that your request be in writing.

Students must have a physical examination by or under the direction of a physician before attending Gan Israel Preschool or within one month of attendance. Examinations performed within 12 months prior to attendance for children two years of age through five years of age are acceptable. Examinations performed within 6 months prior to attendance for children 18 months to 2 years of age are acceptable. The current form required by the Department of Health or a valid physician's form is acceptable. However, each form must have the date of the physical, the dates of immunizations, and the signature of a physician, his/her designee or an official of the local health department.

The Director must see each child's original or a certified copy birth certificate prior to entering the school. Some information will be copied down and kept in the student's file.

All student records at Gan Israel Preschool will be maintained by the Director and made accessible to parents for two years after separation from school.

Emergency Response Procedures

Gan Israel Preschool has a written emergency preparedness plan to respond to a crisis. Instructions for an immediate evacuation and shelter-in-place are provided in the plan. The general response to any emergency includes the following steps:

- Assemble Gan Israel Preschool Crisis Response Team and Crisis Kit
- Notify 911 if necessary
- Seal off high risk area
- Take charge of area/persons until incident is contained or school staff is relieved by appropriate outside authority (police, fire, etc.)
- Preserve evidence and keep notes of the incident
- Contact parents via cell phone

School staff can be contacted at the following numbers: Main office (703) 426-1980 Rabbi Deitsch's Cell (703) 338-9854 Faith Dunmore (for aftercare emergencies only) (703) 986-9422



Jewish Holidays

Jewish holiday celebrations (and especially a weekly Kabbalat Shabbat) are a central part of the curriculum. Experiential programs will be used to introduce or enhance students' knowledge, enjoyment and appreciation of the central role such holidays play in our lives. Watch for flyers and e-mails inviting family members to our unique Family Events which are available for sponsorship in honor of a special occasion.

Tzedakah

At Gan Israel we teach the value of Tzedakah (charitable giving) as an integral part of Jewish community life and responsibility. The students are encouraged to bring a small containter/Ziploc with coins participate in the tradition of giving Tzedakah. At the end of the year, the faculty will determine the disposition of these funds.

Toys

Please do not allow children to bring toys to school except for Show 'n Share. Please do not send ANY violent toys (gun, etc.) or Superhero toys to school – even for Show 'n Share.

School Pets

Children love school pets. However, with the Preschool house unused on the weekends, class pets are not advised at this time.

Homeroom App

Teachers will be posting information and photos on the Homeroom App. Please download the app so you can see and learn about all the wonderful learning and programs happening at the Gan. Teachers will try to post photos serveral times a week. Please remeber that these pictures are for parents only and should not be reshared on any social media platform.

School Field Trips

At this time no field trips are planned which require transportation by car, van or bus. Should a child arrive at school after the group has left for a field trip, the parent is responsible for transporting the child to the field trip or taking home the child for the day.

Show 'n Share Day

Show and Share is a Pre K favorite. Your child's teacher will determine which day of the week is Show 'n Share Day. Your children can bring in an item they chose from home, with the approval of Mom or Dad first, of course! They will have the opportunity to talk about it to their classmates during circle time and share it during free play. This gives the children an opportunity to share their belongings with their friends while boosting their confidence and self-esteem, practicing language skills, and practicing social skills (for example, wait-ing for a turn to talk).

We believe in good parent school communication. Newsletters are sent home every Friday.

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The Birthday Book Buy is a wonderful way to donate a new book to your child's class.

Birthdays

Each child is encouraged to celebrate his/her birthday at school. We have recently instituted a tradition of celebrating the child's hebrew birthday at a Rosh Chodesh (new month) gathering for the Hebrew month that their birthday falls in. We celebrate with a treat, crown, and cards. Parents are invited to participate in the celebration. Additionally, parents may choose to donate a book to their child's class in honor of their child's birthday.

Birthday Book Buy– for eighteen dollars, the Birthday Book Buy offers parents the opportunity to celebrate your child's birthday in a meaningful and lasting way.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity, please contact your child's teacher three weeks before his/her birthday.

Invitations for birthday parties held outside of the school may not be distributed in school unless all of your child's classmates are invited. Birthdays are a huge deal to the children and they love to discuss their parties with their friends. Therefore, we encourage parents to invite all of your child's classmates to a home birthday party. This prevents anyone from feeling left out.

Non-Parent Classroom Guests

Custodial parents are welcome in the classroom announced or unannounced for reasonable amounts of time and with reasonable amounts of disruption. Non-parent guests must be cleared through Director before visiting.

Non-Parent Communication

Sometimes faculty members are asked to complete forms concerning student behavior or achievement and those forms are requested from doctors, therapists, other schools, etc. The forms must be photocopied after completion and given to the Director for distribution. At no time do these forms go back to parents.

Parent Communication

Gan Israel Preschool is more than just a place for your children; we are a community of parents and children and staff – all committed to the best for our kids. Open, honest, regular communication is the key to maintaining that community. We want you to feel the same warmth and excitement at Gan Israel Preschool that your children experience, and we want you to know the high regard that we have for our students and their families. Conversely, we need to know about happenings (good and bad) at home that may affect our students (sleepless night, Grandma coming, new house, etc.). Call, e-mail, write, visit – a lot! Calls should go to the main Chabad office (703-426-1980) and will be routed appropriately. Staff e-mail addresses will provided in the beginning of the school year.

- Teachers should return phone calls within 24 hours even if the call back must say, "I will get back to you later".
- Teachers will be using the Homeroom App to let you know about your child's curriculum and classroom activities. Please take the time to read and to notice if special items need to be brought in by your child or if a program is happening.
- E-mail will be used as much as practicable.
- Please advise the school if parents are going to be away from home for any length of

time. This is especially important if the absence is caused by unexpected conditions, such as hospitalization, which may be upsetting for your child. When teachers are aware of such conditions, they can be of great support and help in alleviating your child's distress.

Back-to-School Night takes place in September. One parent-teacher conference will be scheduled each year; but parents should never hesitate to contact the school with information or concerns or questions. Parents with concerns should first address them with the classroom teacher. If further consultation is required, please contact the Director or Rabbi Deitsch, both of whom can be reached at the main Chabad office (703-426-1980).

The following persons are available to you and your children and can be reached at the following telephone and address:

Rabbi Deitsch – Director of Chabad of Northern Virginia(Gan Israel Preschool is under the auspices of Chabad of Northern Virginia)Office: 703-426-1980Home: 703-764-0450

Beth Frame– consultant Cell: 571- 484 -7140

Home: 703 865 7860

Sara Adler - Parent/Teacher Liason cell 718 809-9206 **All teachers and assistants** 703-426-1980 3939 Prince William Drive, Fairfax, VA 22031



Preschool is a community of parents, children, and staff– all committed to the best for our children.

Gan Israel



We love our school. Glad to have you on board.

AFTERCARE PROGRAM:

Gan Israel Preschool now offers full time aftercare Monday through Friday until 5:30 PM. The commitment of our preschool to ensure your child's growth and learning extends into our full time care program. Our extended care program includes movement, cooking, science, and art activities. During the later fall and winter months, aftercare on Friday will end early to allow time for Shabbat preparations. To join the aftercare program on a regular basis, please notify the school by submitting the aftercare form.

When the aftercare is open, parents who would like to leave their children in the aftercare for a "here and there" occasion need to give the school 24 hours notice to ensure availablity for their child. A space is not guaranteed for drop in care. If space is available, cost for drop in aftercare is \$12.00 per hour.

HELPFUL TIPS:

•Please see that your child is up in time to eat a good breakfast; please try to avoid hurrying to school.

•Please see that s/he has sufficient rest and sleep – usually 12 or 13 hours for the two and a half - three year olds.

•To make your child more comfortable, please provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings.

•Please endeavor to send your child off to school in a happy frame of mind and show interest in what s/he does at school and what s/he is learning.

•Please encourage your child to talk about what s/he did without pressuring or emphasizing his/her behavior.

•Please 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.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

Following is a list of supplies that students should bring with them to their orientation visit:

A smock (with sleeves, preferably)- optional

A pair of rain boots to be left at school (we go outside daily and do not want the children's shoes and socks to become wet and muddy) - 3's and 4's

4 packs of diaper wipes

6 rolls of paper towels

6 packs of disinfectant wipes

3 boxes of tissues

Diapers and wipes, if necessary (not included in the 4 packs of wipes) to remain at school

A weather appropriate complete change of clothing 2 photos of the child