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GAN CHAYA PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018

5777/5778



**Gan Chaya Preschool • Young Israel-Chabad
3696 Fisher Road • Palm Harbor, FL 34683
727-789-0408**

Gan Chaya's Parent Handbook 2017-2018

Shalom!

Gan Chaya is a Jewish preschool inspired by the principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Central to the philosophy is a deep respect for the potential in young individuals.

Our professionally trained staff is dedicated to helping each child develop, while tending to their emotional growth and well-being.

Gan Chaya sees each child as a unique and precious gift entrusted into its care. We welcome every child regardless of background or affiliation, and appreciate their differences.

The school is devoted to helping children learn social skills, building their self-confidence, and teaching them the preliminary skills to explore and experience the world around them.

Our curriculum is woven with the timeless values and morals of our heritage. Children are introduced to Jewish traditions and holidays, which are integrated into our daily routine and interactive play.

Our program is specifically designed to create a warm and supportive environment that will nurture your child's unique style of learning and discovery.

We ask you to please review this handbook carefully.

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Non-Discrimination/ Inclusion Policy

Gan Chaya Jewish Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational or admissions policies, hiring, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

COMMUNICATION

- A. Open communication between staff and parents is very important. During the orientation process, please share with us your child's likes, dislikes, and personality traits. As the year progresses, please inform the school of any changes in your child's attitude toward school. In turn, the staff will share with you your child's experiences and activities. Newsletters will be sent home monthly.
- B. There are two parent-teacher conferences during the year. These conferences are an opportunity for the parents and staff to discuss your child's progress. Of course, any time you wish to speak to a teacher, please call the school and leave a message for that teacher. Your call will be returned at the earliest convenient time.

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD

- A. Your child's health is important to us. Each student's **Health Exam and Certificate of Immunization must be completed and submitted to the office by the first week of school.** Your pediatrician will have the appropriate forms.
- B. We count on you to recognize the following symptoms of ill health such as, **fever, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, or other illness**, and we trust that you will not bring your child to school sick (Your child must be free of fever for at least 24 hours before returning to school). If your child has developed a communicable illness, please let us know so that we can inform other parents.
- C. If your child is ever hurt or becomes ill at school, we will take whatever initial steps are necessary and appropriate and will contact you immediately. If your child is ill, we will ask you or the authorized person listed on the emergency form, to come and pick up your child **within one hour** of being notified.
- D. If your child receives a minor injury or bruise at school, appropriate first aid will be administered. An Incident Report will be filled out by the teacher

and signed by the director, indicating the time and description of what occurred. A copy will be sent home to the parent that day.

- E. We are not permitted to administer any medication without written permission from a parent. This policy applies to both prescribed and “over the counter” medication. Please contact the office to obtain the appropriate forms.
- F. Head Lice: All children will be checked periodically for lice or nits. Any child found with lice or nits in their hair will be sent home and can only return to school with a Doctor’s letter stating that they are totally free of lice and nits.

WHAT TO SEND WITH YOUR CHILD

- A. Two full sets of change of clothing in a large Ziploc bag marked with your child’s name.
- B. If your child is not trained, please send a package of diapers and a box of wipes. We will notify you when a new box is needed.
- C. For children who stay for the afternoon, please send a small labeled blanket for rest time. (They will be sent home each Friday for washing. Please return them on Monday.)
- D. It is best that children wear washable, comfortable, and easy to put on clothes. Please provide a large tee-shirt or smock for painting, **Children must wear sturdy shoes such as sneakers or tennis shoes. Sandals and thongs are not permitted.**
- E. The school provides age appropriate toys. Children should not bring toys from home, with the exception of your child’s “sharing day.” If you have a book or special tape that may be of interest to all of the children, we would enjoy sharing this with the class. Please consult the teacher.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

Please provide a Kosher and nutritious snack for your child. Children who stay for lunch should bring a ***Dairy*** or ***Pareve Kosher*** lunch in a **labeled lunch box**, with the appropriate cooling/thermal containers. Candy should not be sent.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday parties may be celebrated at the Shabbos Party on Friday. Please make arrangements with the director. To facilitate the growth of our Preschool Library, we ask each family to donate a **special** book to your classroom in honor of your child’s birthday. Please ask to see our ***Book Wish List***.

MITZVAH NOTES

Children are encouraged to bring Mitzvah notes from their parents, describing the **Mitzvot** (good deeds) they have done at home.

TZEDAKAH

One of the most beautiful Mitzvot is Tzedakah (Charity). **We would need a bag of coins (approximately 200) at the beginning of the school year for each child, to last the entire school year.** We find that children derive much joy from giving Tzedakah each day, while learning the act of kindness and giving.

3.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- A. School begins at 9:00am. There is an early arrival program starting at 8:00am which is available only by pre-registration with the director. This can be arranged on a weekly or monthly basis. If you arrive early, please remain with your child until the appropriate time.
- B. **Arrival:** Punctuality is important. Please arrive on time with your child. It is best for your child's adjustment to school to begin the day together with the rest of the class. Please try not to linger in the classroom when dropping off your child.
- C. **Dismissal:** It is important to pick up your child at the scheduled dismissal time. This will be added to your next pre-school invoice. Our half day program dismissal is at **12:30pm**. When picking up your child at this time, please wait by the door for the teacher to bring your child to you (walking into the classroom disrupts our classroom routine). For those who stay for our full day program, dismissal will begin at **3:40pm** until **3:50pm**. The teacher will bring your child to you at the circular driveway.
- D. A late fee of \$15 will be charged if your child is not picked up within 5 minutes of the dismissal window. At that time your child will join the after-care program. After-care program runs from **4:00pm** until **4:50pm**. The same late fee rules apply for children enrolled in after-care.
- E. If **someone other than the parent** is picking up your child, please inform us in writing that morning. We will not release a child to any other person without written permission. In cases of emergency a phone call is sufficient.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) offers interested parents a chance to provide input to our program. This includes Fundraising, Holiday Planning and Special Speaker Presentations, or any other activities that this committee may facilitate.

Behavior and Discipline Policy

Discipline is learned by the creation of an environment that fosters cooperation and consideration for others. Learning is greatly facilitated when children feel safe, secure, and self-confident. Our goal, therefore, is to establish a warm and loving environment in which we can teach children the right way to handle a situation.

Guidance in the Toddler Classrooms

Toddlers are imaginative explorers with seemingly endless energy and they like to imitate everything and do everything themselves. To support these intense feelings and the mood changes that accompany them, their environment must offer a high level of interaction and emotional security. When conflicts arise while trying to guide a child's negative behavior, it is important to provide alternative toys and activities. Encouraging children to use words and to express what they want, as well as consistency in scheduling and planning, helps to reduce a toddler's frustration.

Guidance in the Preschool Classroom

From time to time, it becomes necessary to redirect the actions or energies of a child in a positive manner to more appropriate behavior. Children may sometimes need to be removed from the situation for a "cooling down time" within the teacher's sight. This time should not be viewed as a punishment, just as a cooling-off period until he/she is capable of returning to the group.

In some situations they may need a consequence for their actions. Humiliating and frightening techniques are never to be used. Consequences must not be associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking, or any other form of physical punishment by any staff member is prohibited.

If discipline continues to be a problem, the parent should be called for a conference to discuss the possible solutions.

It is important that we remain realistic in the expectation of the behavior of each child, considering the developmental stage of his age.

Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. At times, if a child is observed to be experiencing difficulty behaving or is behaving in the classroom in a way that puts themselves or other children at risk, the teaching faculty and administrative team along with the teachers may consult and recommend that he or she be tested or observed by an independent professional diagnostician who can help clarify the nature and source of the difficulty. Such testing may be a prerequisite for the child's continued enrollment in the program. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parents exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child. Verbal abuse to staff.

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Prior to expulsion, a parent will be called and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both the center and the parent to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the

child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The family will be given one week's notice to find another center to provide care for this child.

**You are welcome to come visit your child's class at any time.
We just ask that you inform the office of your presence.**

We look forward to a wonderful year with your child!!