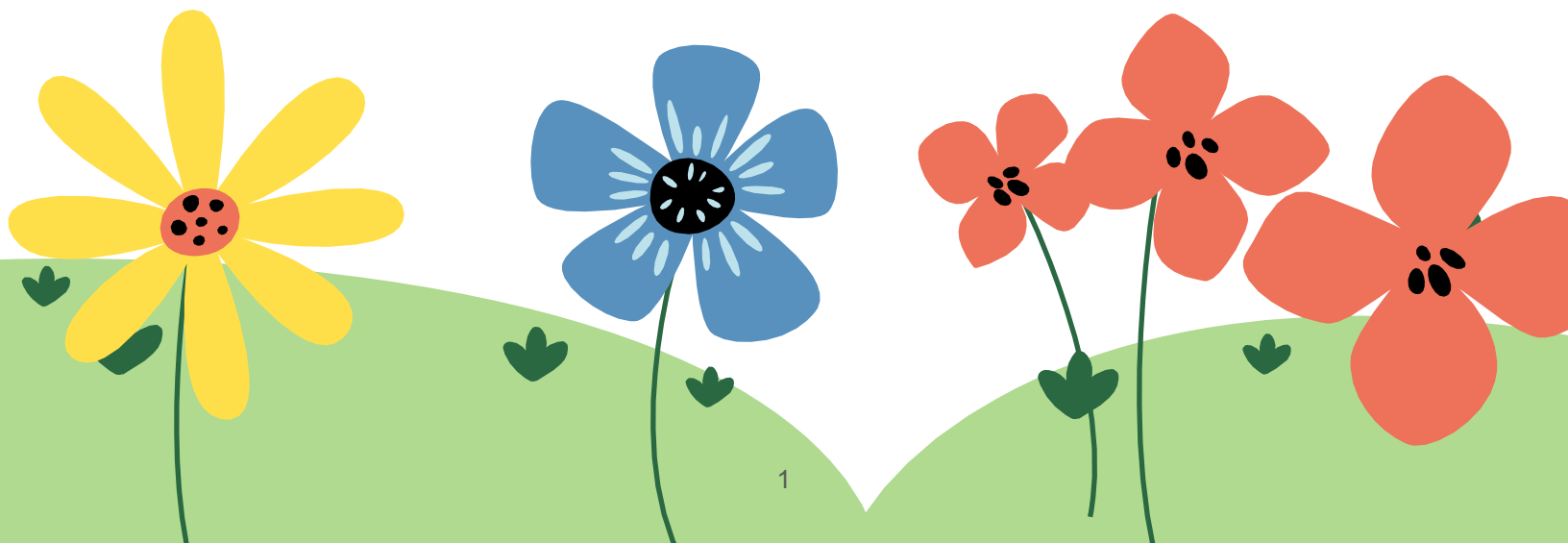




# Parent Handbook 2023-24 5784



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# Welcome to our Dear Families!

Dear Parents,

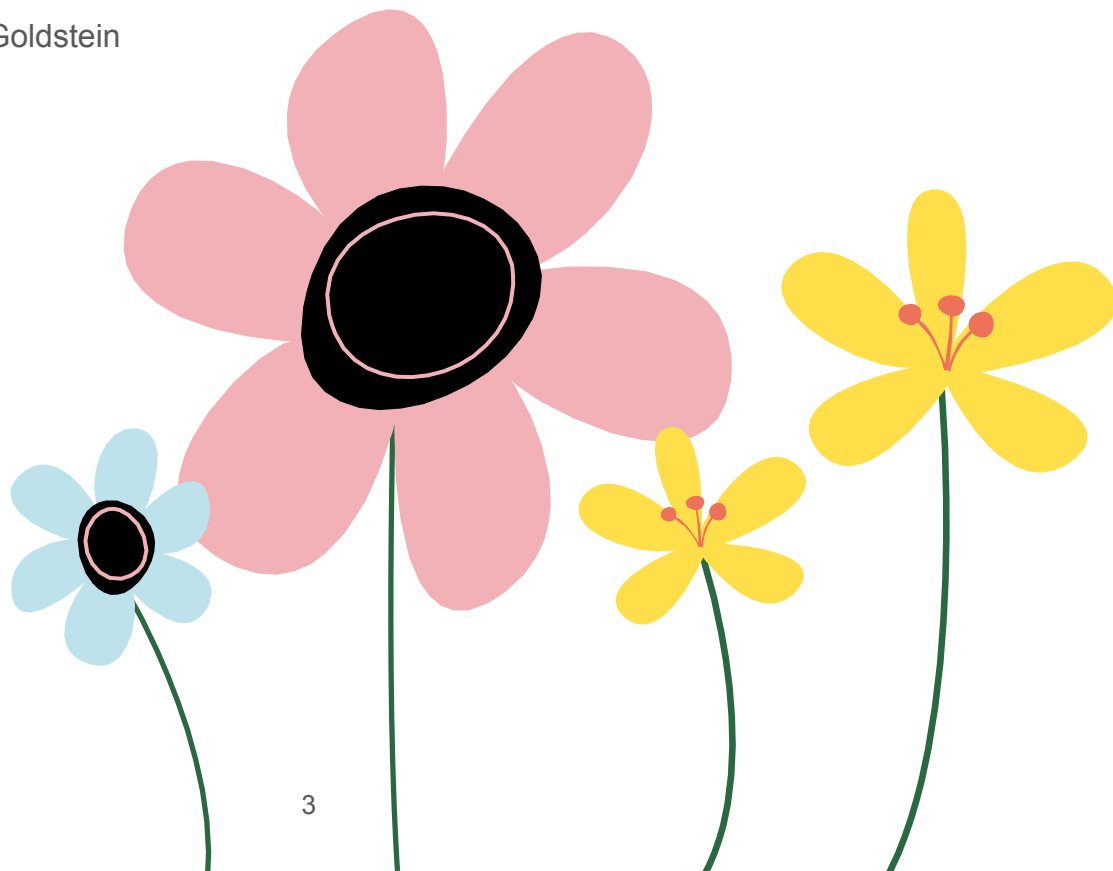
With gratitude to Hashem, we would like to welcome you to The Shul's Child Enrichment Center. You have entrusted us with your most valuable gem, and we are committed to providing the best, happy, productive environment and care to make your gem/s shine!

Our Parent Handbook is designed to share with you an understanding of our program, to provide you with information on our goals and policies, and to help encourage you to become an informed and an active part of our school community.

We look forward to working together and taking part in your child's growth throughout their preschool years. Please feel free to share your thoughts, concerns and suggestions and any questions you may have.

May we all have true joy from our children!

Warm regards,  
Chana Lipskar and Chana Goldstein



# About our school



## Our Philosophy

The Child Enrichment Center is a Montessori-inspired learning center which focuses on delivering a hands-on experience through sensory stimulation, fine and gross motor skills development, music, dramatic play, arts and crafts, movement, science and language arts.

We provide a warm, safe, Jewish environment where our children can feel secure to explore and learn. In this environment, each child can grow and develop and be proud of their heritage and who they are.

We offer a program which focuses on delivering a hands-on experience through sensory stimulation, fine and gross motor skills development, music, dramatic play, arts and crafts, movement, science and language arts.

Our philosophy stresses the value of moral and spiritual growth as much as cognitive development, knowing that gaining respect and care for one another and building positive self-esteem are crucial elements that will ensure happiness and success throughout life.

All of the Jewish holidays, Mitzvos, Middos (moral and spiritual development) and language are taught offering a multi-sensorial experience. Each concept and experience becomes meaningful to each child in a different way.



## Our Goals

- To create an environment based on the values and teaching of the Torah
- To provide a nurturing and safe environment, supporting the child's physical, social, and emotional well-being
- To instill a love of Hashem, Torah, and Mitzvos
- To nurture and refine the child's Middos (character traits) with a focus on loving every Jew
- To instill a sense of healthy self-esteem
- To establish a positive attitude toward learning
- To implement an individualized, child-centered, Montessori-inspired curriculum
- To achieve a strong foundation in literacy
- To help cultivate each child's innate, ultimate potential through high self-realizations



## Our Environment

The teacher's role is that of facilitator and guide, encouraging the child to explore and discover new ideas. Teachers are role models for the children and loving caregivers who are well trained in early childhood development and experts in understanding all of the child's needs: social, emotional, intellectual and physical.

Our choice-oriented program stems from our respect for individual differences, learning pace and style. It is well balanced by the structured group work and classroom environment we offer. The activities and materials foster creativity, critical thinking skills as well as communication and cooperation skills. Respect and love for the environment, the self and one another are the basis for spiritually nurturing positive self-esteem.

The children's interaction with one another also enables an essential opportunity for growth. They learn how to communicate with each other with Ahavas Yisroel (love of our fellow person) while finding constructive solutions to their problems. We are looking forward to working together with the parents to help each child reach their potential!



## Our Team

Our teachers are chosen for their professionalism, as well as their caring and compassionate personalities. Our teachers delight in unlocking your child's natural curiosity through providing the stimulation necessary for and experiential learning process. All staff participates in annual in-service training in order to remain alert to the ever-changing needs of today's families and to the findings of current ד"ר research. Staff development is ongoing throughout the year. All of our staff holds First Aid and CPR cards and have all necessary teaching certifications mandated by the Department of Children and Families.



## Our Teacher Training

- Montessori Teacher Certification provided by the NAMC (North American Montessori Center).
- Child Care Training Certification under the auspices of The Florida Department of Child and Families.
- CPR & First Aid provided by Nursing Unlimited.
- Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training provided by Crisis Prevention Institute.

Staff development is ongoing throughout the year. All of our staff holds First Aid and CPR cards and have all necessary teaching certifications mandated by the Department of Children and Families.



## Experiential Learning

By definition, experiential learning brings together observation, creativity, and active interactions. It allows children to see a purpose and to enjoy their learning experience. Educational theorist David Kolb believes that learning happens through the transformation of experiences. Kolb's learning cycle consists of four stages: (1) Concrete experience, (2) Observation and reflection, (3) Forming abstract concepts, and (4) Testing new situations.

Here are some examples of how we implement experiential learning:

**Shabbat Experience:** Every Friday, we choose one child in the class as the Shabbat Aba, and one girl as the Shabbat Ima. We sing Shabbat songs together, light the Shabbat candles, and make Kiddush.

**Challah Baking:** Each Friday, the children have a delightful opportunity to braid Challah dough for Shabbat to bring home freshly baked. This is a highlight of the week, and all the children look forward to it!

**Mitzvah Notes:** Our "Mitzvah" tree (or other Mitzvah themed incentive) in each classroom allows parents to send in a note from home whenever a child does a good deed. The note is read and hung up on the tree at circle time.

**Holidays:** Children celebrate Jewish and US national holidays with crafts, songs, plays, stories school-wide gatherings. Each holiday is turned into a unique hands-on educational experience and becomes a meaningful part of your child's life.



## Extra-curricular Activities

**Music & Movement:** Using a variety of unique instruments, children discover beats, rhythms and the different sounds and tunes of instruments. We are Incorporating Israeli songs so our children getting the exposure to the Hebrew language.



## CEC Enrichment Program

**Mindfulness & Social Smart:** This unique program teaches social and emotional skills in a fun and interactive way using storytelling, games, teamwork activities, puppetry, art and role-play. We focus on the following key areas:

1. Friendship Skills
2. Empathy
3. Emotion Management
4. Communication
5. Problem Solving

**Gross Motor:** We have a variety of gross motor activities in our multi purpose room for the children to interact with throughout the week.

**FUNDamentals:** This class integrates OT in our curriculum so that important foundational skills/tools are taught to the children. The goal is to solidify foundational skills as building blocks to more complex classroom skills.



# Transitioning into school

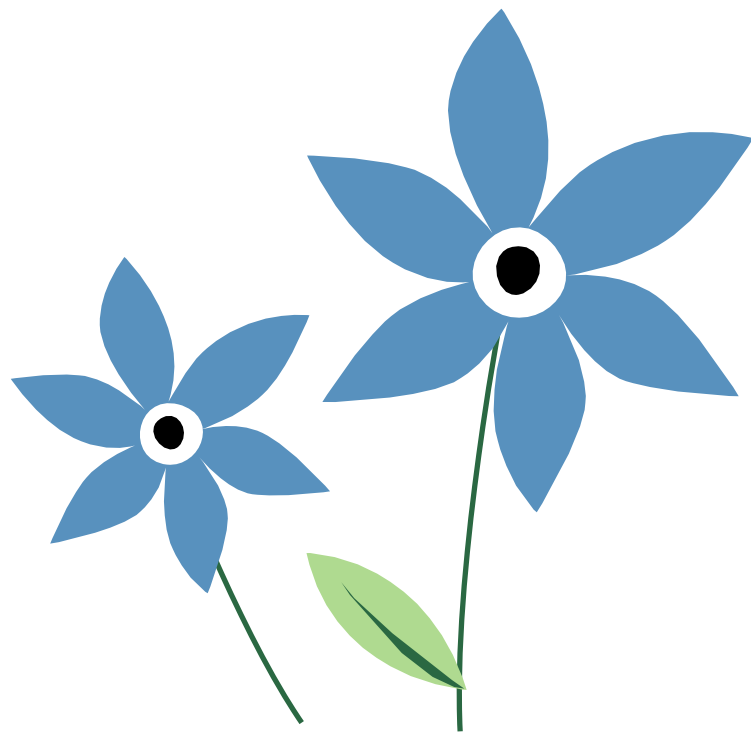
Transitioning from a home to school environment can be challenging for some children.

First time students will be asked to attend for short periods of time and slowly increase in hourly increments for the first week of school, or as the teacher sees fit.

Parents need to be available to pick the child up upon request of the teacher for the first week of school within 15 minutes. While it is okay for some crying, consistent hysteria lasting for hours can be traumatic. If you feel your child will benefit from having Mom nearby for the first few days, please reach out to us to create a plan that will work for everyone.

To help your child throughout the school year:

- Make sure they are well rested.
- Allow lots of time for personal routine, a good breakfast, and a pleasant and safe ride to school.
- Have a cheerful, positive attitude as your child leaves you, either at home or school.
- Let your child just stand and watch, knowing that observation is one way of participating.
- Don't put pressure on your child to produce something to take home.
- Encourage your child to talk about school by asking specific questions, such as “What color did you paint with today?” or “What was for snack today?” “Which lesson did you enjoy today?” etc.
- Inform the teacher if there is any type of change or difficult situation going on at home, examples including moving, parent out of town, etc.



# Connecting with us

Studies have shown that children do better in school when parents are involved in their children’s academic lives. We believe very strongly that consistent and positive communication between school and home is in the best interest of all our children!

The following will facilitate this strong bond and connection:



**Brightwheel App:** Using the app allows us to communicate with the parents on a daily basis. You will receive an update with notifications regarding your child’s meals, naps, activities and other pertinent information including some photos. You may leave a note for the teachers in the app as well. It is your responsibility to check the app on a daily basis to keep yourself informed of the daily activities and information.



**Email:** Please make sure that an email address you check regularly is on file with us. To get in touch with us via email, please email us at [admin@thehsulpreschool.org](mailto:admin@thehsulpreschool.org)



**Phone:**  
Preschool office: (786) 662-3191



**“The Enricher” Weekly Newsletter:** Read our weekly newsletter for special messages from your child’s teachers and administrators. Get a peek into what your child learned and did over the past week. The newsletter also includes calendar reminders, so it’s a great way to keep abreast of everything that’s going on in one go!





**Parent Teacher Conferences:** We host Parent-Teacher conferences twice a year to discuss your child's progress at school and to share solutions to academic and behavioral situations. You will be given a choice of time slots to meet with the teachers. We strongly encourage all parents to attend these conferences. It is widely agreed among educators, that attending a parent-teacher conference is extremely important.



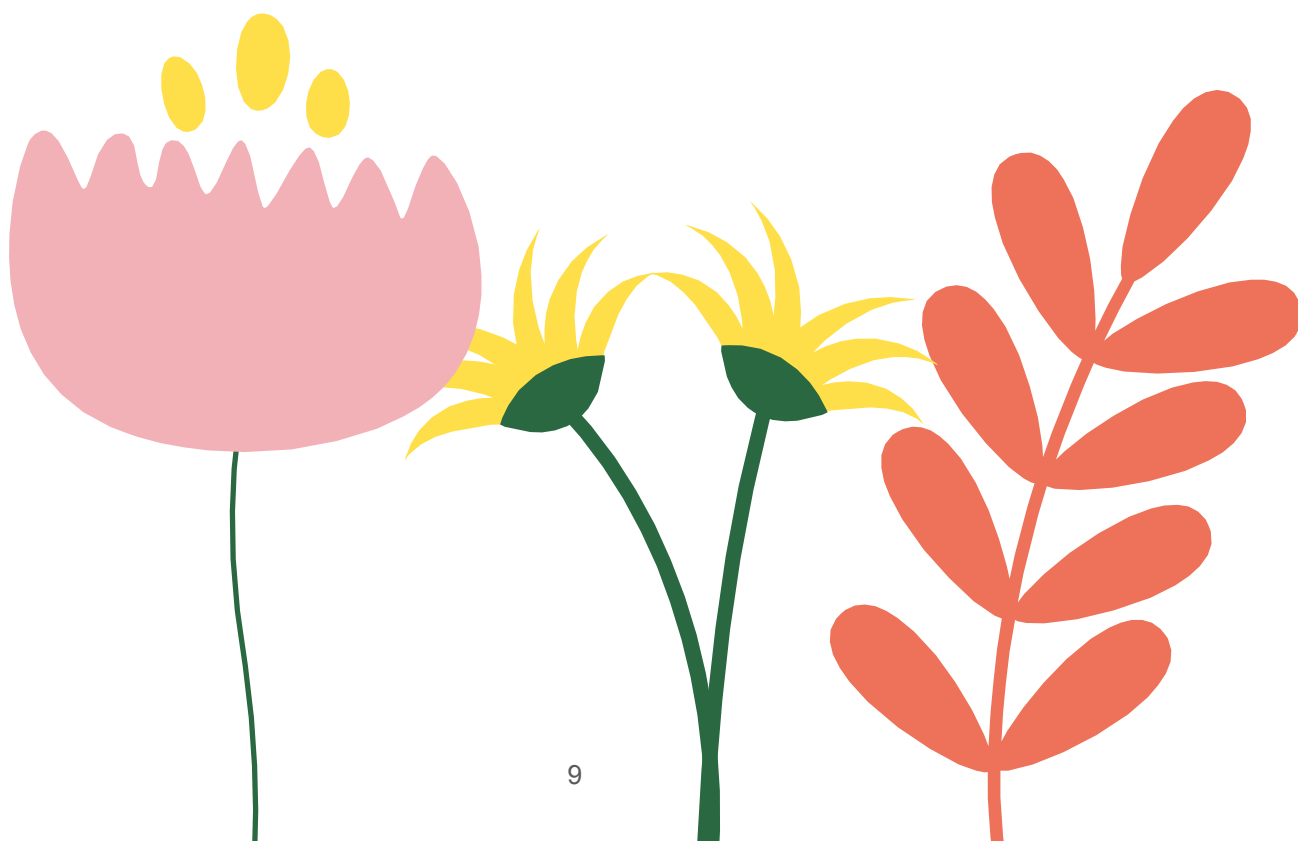
**Birthdays:** We love to make every child's birthday a special event at the school! Please be in touch with your child's teacher to plan the celebration. You can find more information about birthday treats in the Food section of this handbook.

**Get in touch with your child's teacher:** Parents are encouraged to be in contact with the teachers as often as necessary. To speak to your child's teacher, you can send a message via Brightwheel app and schedule a phone call or in-person meeting with the teacher.

**Get in touch with the directors:** We are always available for you. Please drop by our office, call our school hotline, or email us.

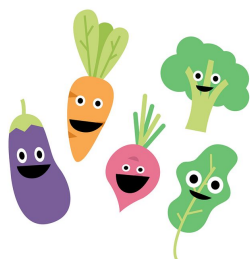
**Emergencies during the day only:** If there is an emergency during the day and you need to speak with us urgently, please call:

- Chana Lipskar (305) 528-4813
- Chana Goldstein (718) 6131415



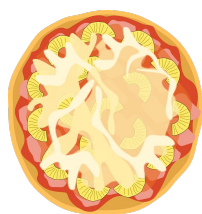
# Meals at our school

We encourage parents to pack nutritious, balanced lunches for your child to help instill a lifelong foundation of healthy eating.



## Kosher Certifications

Dairy foods brought into the classroom must be Chofav Yisroel certified. Parents are asked to read labels and to make sure that products being sent to school have a reliable Hechsher (Kosher certification). Please note that a Hechsher (Kosher symbol) is not enough on a grain item (including pretzels) for it to be Pas Yisroel, it needs to actually say "Pas Yisroel."



## Lunch Schedule

- **Monday-Thursday:** Please send a lunch with your child, ensuring it is clearly labeled as Pareve, Dairy, or Meat. Please make sure all foods are ready to eat.
- **Friday:** School provides pizza brought in from a restaurant

We are excited to be launching a lunch program after the holidays! Stay tuned for more details.



## Nut-free Policy

Our program is 100% NUT-FREE. Please check products carefully to be sure they are both nut-free AND have been packaged in a nut-free facility.



## Preparing Your Child's Lunches

Please label your child's lunch clearly. Make sure all foods are ready to eat. Please cut and peel fruit as your child requires. All lunch foods that are not eaten at school are packed up and sent home with your child. Please be aware of what your child is/isn't eating.

## Snacks

Our school provides healthy, nut-free snacks for your child, twice a day.

*Scan the code to the right to see a sample snack menu.*



# Celebrating Birthdays

Birthdays are important milestones in your child's life. We strive to make your child feel as special as possible on their birthday, and to make the experience positive and educational for everyone in the classroom. The following steps outline how to plan the perfect birthday celebration for your child.

- Get in touch with your child's teacher to discuss arrangements that will work for the class.
- If you would like to provide birthday cupcakes, please make arrangements with Rolling Pin Cupcakes. (Chocolate or white icing only--no colored buttercream.) No birthday cakes, or baked goods from any other bakeries are permitted.
- If you would like to sponsor an additional lesson/book or toy for your child's classroom in celebration of their birthday, please let us know. Each teacher has a "wish list" with items they would like for their class and you will be able to choose something from that list.
- If you would like to sponsor pizza for your child's class or for the school, please get in touch with us.



## What your child needs in school

We appreciate your cooperation in making sure that all children are properly equipped for each day of learning and fun!

- Children should be dressed for school in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing
- Children are not permitted to come to school in Crocs or flip-flops. Children must be wearing a shoe, sneaker, or sandal with proper support.
- Each child should have at least one complete change of clothing in school--including underwear, socks, and shoes.
- If your child is in diapers, please send along a sufficient amount of diapers and wipes.
- Please make sure all items that you send to school with your child are clearly labeled with their name.

# Getting involved at school

We are incredibly grateful to the parents who find the time in their busy schedules to volunteer at our school. Parents are always encouraged to take an active role in our classroom activities as well as our outings and holiday celebrations. .



## PTA

If you would like to volunteer to become a Class Mom, please contact Parent-Teacher Association President Shena Dominitz and Batya Cosiol.



## Fundraising

We have a number of fundraising opportunities throughout the year, and we are counting on your support in order to continue providing your children with the best education and developmental experiences!



## Parents as advocates

We are all a part of this community together, and we ask parents to partner with us and act as ambassadors of our school when you are out and about. Please be positive and speak highly of your experience. If you ever have any concerns, speak to us directly.

# Your input

The Shul's Child Enrichment Center is here to provide a nurturing, Jewish environment where the child can grow in his self esteem, understanding, and abilities. Every moment of our day is focused around the children and their discoveries. Together with the parents we hope to have a successful and fulfilling year.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, we welcome your input. Please feel free and comfortable to give us a call.

We're looking forward to a happy, healthy year full of learning!

# Partnering and Support

Our educational goals at the CEC cover all developmental areas, including language development, fine and gross motor skills, and social skills. The early years of your child's development are so important for building the foundation for abilities that will take them through life, and early intervention for any concerns is the key for the child's future academic experience so they can reach their maximum potential.



## Screenings at the CEC

We are pleased to announce that the CEC will be conducting optional screenings for speech/language by TS Therapy and occupational therapy (OT) by Miss Nancy for all children during the month of November. The cost is \$15 for each screening.



## What Is an Occupational Therapy screening?

Occupational Therapy addresses the areas of fine motor skills that span across the life of a child. Regarding school-age children, examples of this include handwriting, cutting, and coordination. Even if you do not suspect any problems with these skills, we encourage you to allow for this screening in order to address potential concerns at an early age. Screenings will be provided by Nancy Amar, OTR, of Miss Nancy, Inc.



## What is a Speech Therapy screening?

The screening will identify any speech and/or language difficulties your child may be experiencing. Additionally, hearing screens are available in order to help identify if further audiological testing is recommended. Speech/language screenings will be provided by Tracy Spitz, M.A., CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist, of TL Therapy.

Please Note: The CEC has updated its policy regarding therapists who come to our school and work with the kids on premises.  
Please stay tuned for more information

## General drop-off guidelines



### Greeting

Parents want to see their child greeted warmly and individually by the teachers at the start of the day--and rightfully so. Our greeting time extends until 9:00 am. After that, we start activities in the classroom, and the focus of the staff is on the group as a whole.



### Please arrive on time

Punctuality is a key character trait that you can begin to instill even at a very young age, and establishing a routine is vital for the children's growth and development. Please follow the Drop-Off Routine for your child's classroom. If you are running late, please message your child's teachers via Brightwheel. Late arrivals must be at walk-up (no carpool).

## General pick-up guidelines



### Authorized pick-up person

At the beginning of the school year, parents must designate an authorized pick-up person in the event that you will not be picking up their child. Only a parent or an authorized pick-up person has permission to pick up a student. If your child is going home with someone other than yourself or a family member, you must notify the Preschool Office. If your plans change during the day, please let us know of your child's arrangements.



### Please pick your children up on time

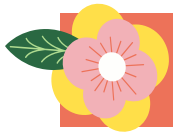
This is another essential element of building good habits and self-confidence in your children and is respectful of the teachers' and other parents' time as well. The children are so eager to see you and tell you about what they did in school!

### Children left after dismissal times

Please understand that there are serious security and safety issues involved with children left after dismissal times. We kindly request that you plan for winter traffic, school zones, unpredictable weather, and construction traffic in order to arrive on time.

### After Care program

The CEC is offering aftercare program from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm. (Excluding Fridays. Additional aftercare fee does apply. For parents that are interested more information will be provided the third week of school.



# Morning Drop-off Routines

## Drop-off location

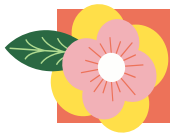
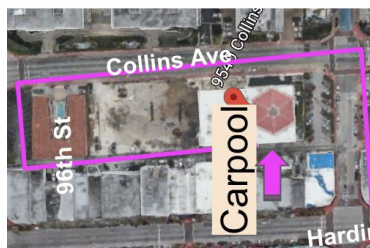
1. Carpool lane - The Shul garage
2. Classroom - Parents are able to drop off their child in the class.

## Drop-off time

8:30 a.m - 9:00 a.m.

## Morning Carpool procedure

Parents will drive through the carpool lane using the alley behind The Shul. See the illustration:



# Noon Pick-Up

## Half Day:

### Time

12:00 p.m.

### Location

At the lobby in the parking level of school building.

## Full Day:

### Time

Monday - Thursday: 3:00- 3:30 p.m.

Friday: 1:30- 2:00 p.m.

Fridays during daylight savings:

1:00- 1:30 p.m.

### Location

From your child's classroom

## Please Note:

Carpool for pickup will begin once we have access to our new garage. Please stay tuned for Carpool updates.



# Keep our carpool safe!

Please display a sign in your front window with your child's name written clearly.



First Name  
Last Name

PM1



5 miles per hour  
at all times



No cell phones in the  
carpool lane



## Please do

- Follow all hand signals
- Be patient!



## Please do not

- Get out of your car
- Back up
- Pass other cars





## Lice

B”H

If your child is to be found with nits or lice in their head, please inform the school, and your child will need to remain at home until they are nit/lice free. Your child will need to be checked to show they are nit/lice free before returning to school.



## Developmental Screenings

We utilize proven screening tools and techniques to evaluate the developmental stages of your child. These evaluations take place three times a year. If teachers find that your child could benefit from additional support--educationally, emotionally, socially, or physically--they will work with you to ensure your child receives exactly what they need.



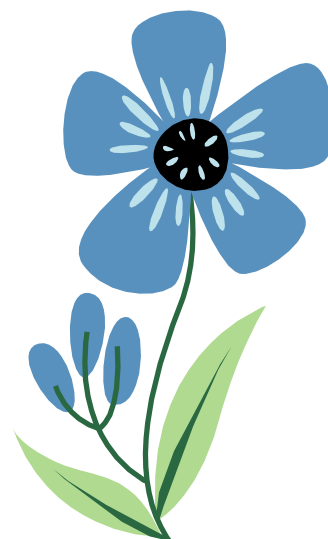
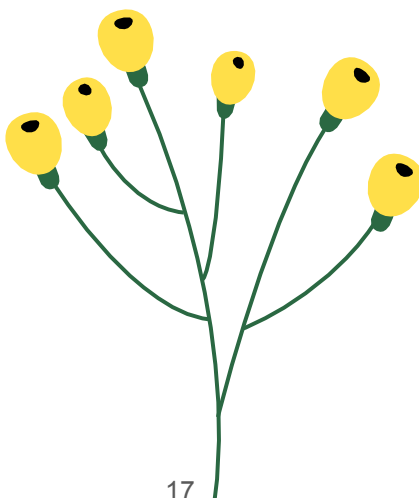
## Toileting & Diapering

We are here to work with you to make the toilet-training process as painless as possible. Children are required to be toilet-trained by the age of 3 years old. As a parent, you must initiate the training process--please communicate with your child's teacher about your toilet-training plan so that we can support you.

Our classrooms are not equipped with restrooms individually, but teachers will take children to the bathroom as needed. Special seats can be provided upon request. We teach proper hygiene to make sure your child develops clean habits.



*Scan the code to see additional wellness and behavioral guidelines.*





## When should I keep my child home?



Fever (Temperature above 99.5)



First 24 hours of taking antibiotics



Nasal discharge  
Cough



Pink eye



Listlessness or lethargy



Shortness of breath



Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease (must stay  
home until all blisters are dried up)



Diarrhea  
Vomiting  
Symptoms of infectious disease



After a rough night (for example, up all  
night coughing)

## When can my child return to school?



Symptom-free



Fever-free for 48 hours (without medication)



Doctor's note (upon request)

Welcome to  
the CEC Family—  
we're so glad  
you're here!





# Child Enrichment Center

## 2023-24 Academic Calendar

5783-5784

No School  
Dismissal at 12pm  
Special Day

All dates are subject to change.  
 Unless specified, all events  
 apply to all classes.

JANUARY // שבט						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY	
19-26	No School - Winter Break
29	School resumes

AUGUST // אב						
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27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST	
21	Transition-Kindergarten Parent Orientation
22	Transition-K Kids Orientation, Pre-Montessori Parents Orientation
23	T-K First Day (half day), PM Kids Orientation
24	PM1-3 Kids Orientation, PM4-6 First Day (half day), T-K Full Day
25	PM1-3 Kids Orientation, PM4-6 Half Day, T-K Full Day
28-29	PM1-3 Half day, PM4-6 Full Day
30	Full day for all classes

FEBRUARY // שבט						
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FEBRUARY	
19	No School - Professional Development Day

SEPTEMBER // אלול						
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SEPTEMBER	
4	No School - Labor Day
15	No School - Rosh Hashana
18	Half day - Tzom Gedalia
25	No School - Yom Kippur
26	School resumes at 9:00 a.m.
28-29	No School - Sukkot

MARCH // אדר						
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MARCH	
11	PTC - Dismissal at 12:00
13	Carnival
15	Regular Friday dismissal resumes
21	Half Day - Taanis Esther
25	No School - Shushan Purim

OCTOBER // תשרי						
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OCTOBER	
2-9	No School - Sukkot
10	School resumes

APRIL // ניסן						
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28	29	30				

APRIL	
17-30	No School - Pesach Break

NOVEMBER // חשוון						
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26	27	28	29	30		

NOVEMBER	
6	No School - Professional Development Day
10	Early Friday dismissal begins
13	PTC - Dismissal at 12
23-24	No School - Thanksgiving
28	Chanukah Festival - Pre-K
29	Chanukah Festival - K

MAY // אייר						
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

MAY	
1	No School - Pesach Break
2	School resumes
14	End of Year Celebration - PM1-3
21	End of Year Celebration - T
23	End of Year Celebration
30	Kindergarten Graduation

DECEMBER // כסלו						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER	
4	Chanukah Festivals - PM4-6
5	Chanukah Festivals - PM1-3
14-15	No School - Chanukah Break
22	Half Day - Asarah B'Teves

JUNE // סיון						
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

JUNE	
7	Last Day of School
10	Hurricane Make-Up Day (if needed); Teachers in Service days