

# “Gani” Preschool of the Arts



## Parent Handbook 2013-2014

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## Introduction & Welcome

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Chabad's Jewish Preschool! Serving the educational needs of children 2 to 4 years, we look forward to opening up new worlds for your child in fun and stimulating ways. I am pleased that you have chosen our school as a home away from home for your child. Here at "Gani" Preschool of The Arts, we are committed to creating a warm, friendly and happy environment for your child, while assisting your child in developing a strong positive awareness of his/her Jewish identity. Aside from Judaic themes and holidays, the curriculum at Chabad Preschool will expose the children to a wide range of experiences including art, movement, pre-writing & reading skills and early math skills, which will all be integrated into our hands-on learning centers. Chabad's Gani Preschool is committed to excellence.

When you bring your child to our school, you will find caring teachers to greet them, who above all will shower your children with love and affection. We offer a creative Jewish learning atmosphere where your child's individual style of learning will be valued and nurtured. We will encourage your child to explore the world, to learn to be part of a group, and to solve problems in a constructive manner. Learning at our school is self-rewarding, joyous and non competitive.

I have prepared this handbook to help ease any anxieties you may have and to assure you that your child is in good hands. To help your child get ready for preschool, please take the time to carefully read this handbook, which contains updated and pertinent information, as well as a school calendar and other addendums. As this booklet has information and answers to parents' most common questions, you may want to keep it handy and refer to it as needed.

Nothing, of course, takes the place of direct contact between you, the rest of the school staff and myself. I invite you to call me at the school to discuss any questions or uncertainties regarding your child's preschool education whenever you feel it necessary.

I look forward to a fully cooperative relationship, and a very successful school year.

Sincerely yours,

**Nechama Farkash and Ziva Rubinstein**

Program directors and site supervisor

## **Gani Preschool's Mission Statement**

- To educate your child in a creative, supportive, and warm Jewish environment, so that your child will not only learn about life as a Jew but will learn to love it too!
- To nourish and stimulate your child's learning priorities, as we develop their cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills, so that your child will be a well-rounded and self-confident individual.

## **Gani Preschool's Philosophy**

Gani Preschool of the Arts is a place where young children receive a warm and enriching preschool experience providing them with the foundation to grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Our goal is to create a preschool environment that integrates the history and traditions of Judaism with a broad spectrum of secular topics. Gani teachers promote the values of respect and responsibility in a positive and encouraging manner. Children who attend our preschool develop into proud and productive Americans knowledgeable and aware of the richness found in their Jewish heritage. Through developmentally appropriate activities, children gain the opportunity to learn and perfect newly acquired skills. Our teachers recognize that children learn best when they experience the world firsthand utilizing all of their senses to participate in learning. At Gani Preschool of the Arts children are encouraged to create, explore, and discover in the safety of our nurturing environment.

## **Reaching Our Educational Goals**

Incorporating learning centers into our classroom provides an environment of choice and opportunity. In every Gani classroom there are art, science, blocks, holiday, dramatic play, writing, and math/manipulative learning centers. Additionally the cozy-corner provides an area dedicated to books and quiet, individual time. All learning centers are amply stocked with fun, educational material. Varied to reflect classroom themes presently being explored, learning center materials challenge the children's development and interests.

Integrating every learning style into the Gani curriculum provides each child with the tools they need to succeed. Creative movement, music and drama enrich the classroom. Through these and other activities the children learn, develop and grow. Special visitors to our classroom, including doctors, musicians and artists, and an exciting schedule of field trips give the children special access to the world around them.

Exposing children to a rich and meaningful Jewish heritage gives them a deep appreciation of their history. Hebrew language and alphabet instruction combined with song and dance, Torah stories, Jewish holidays and traditions make for the most opportune learning experience.

Weekly newsletters encourage family involvement. Offering information on current classroom learning themes as well as important announcements, Gani Preschool of the Arts newsletters are vital to good parent-teacher communication. Working together, we can maximize every child's learning potential. As the year progresses in the Gani Preschool learning arena, children are given the opportunity to develop and reach their educational goals.

### **Toddler Program 2 years old (your child has to be 2 by August 31<sup>st</sup> 2013)**

The Toddler Program strives to help the child develop in the following areas: spoken language, movement, self-confidence, independence, and basic Jewish values and holiday observances. A lovely classroom environment with a blend of sensorial and motor exploration provides numerous enjoyable experiences for the toddlers. At group activities, such as singing, story time and snack, the young child experiences the joy of belonging to a larger community. Staff-student ratio for the toddler class is 1:6.

### **Preschool Program 3-4 years old (your child has to be 3 by August 31<sup>st</sup> 2013)**

The Preschool Program includes: Judaica, pre-math skills, reading readiness, dramatic play, sensorial exploration, art and music. Our rich and meaningful program provides a healthy mix of structured time and free play to encourage proper growth in cognitive, physical and social areas. In our multi-age program we provide both stimulation and challenge, and are supportive of each child's own learning priorities. Staff-student ratio for the preschool class is 1:8.

### **Non-discrimination / Inclusion Policy**

Chabad Jewish preschool values and supports the rights of all children, regardless of ethnicity, religion, national origin, and diverse abilities.

### **Our Staff**

Our staff is made up of teachers, all of whom 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 an experiential learning process. All staff participate in annual in-service training in order to remain abreast with the latest trends in early childhood education. All our staff have a degree, or are working towards a degree in the field of early childhood education.

### **Curriculum and Lesson Plans**

Teachers utilize the Washington School Readiness Performance Standards to prepare weekly lesson plans that include age appropriate activities that encourage and support children's Physical Health, Social & Emotional Skills, Language and Communication Skills and Cognitive Development. A number of skills are developed when children are "playing" in Learning Centers. Judaic themes and holidays are also incorporated daily. A weekly lesson plan is posted in each classroom.

## **Learning Centers**

Your child will have a choice of activities in which to participate each day. Creative art, science, early math, family living, building, fine motor, building blocks, and water play are samples of the centers that are available for your child. Because we believe that play is a child's greatest learning experience, our approach allows children to choose the skills they wish to develop.

As the art center is popular among the children, we wish to convey an important aspect of our philosophy. We do not do the work for the children. You will need to accept your child's artwork as he or she did it. The work will not be teacher fixed. In this way children are able to work freely, and develop a personal pride in their works of art.

## **Operating Hours**

Chabad Preschool's operating days and hours are: Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. for the Toddlers, and 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. for the 3-4 year olds. After care is available from 12:30 p.m until 4:30 p.m (except for winter short Friday). Upon arrival, please accompany your child and greet the teacher. We ask that you do not arrive before 8:25 a.m., as teachers are involved with preparation and are not ready to give the children their full attention.

Unlike regular school, children are not required to be punctual to class. However, parents should keep in mind that by coming on time, your child will have ample time to cultivate friendships and play with the various learning centers before coming to the morning group time.

## **Our Unique Programming**

1) Morning circle: This is a time when we all come together to start our day. We do songs, movement activities to foster body awareness, self regulation and listening skills; also Tefilah (morning prayers), and calendar. This small part of our day is a time in which we work on being part of a large group.

2) Tzedakah time: Tzedakah (righteous giving) is a daily occurrence at "Gani". We will have a classroom container decorated by the kids and during Tefilah the children are encouraged to "open their hearts" and take out a few of their coins to give Tzedakah.

Pennies, nickels, dimes, or a combination of loose coins should be brought in at the beginning of the school year. The amounts are less important than establishing the concept of helping others and sharing what they have.

3) Mitzvah Notes: Your child learns the importance of performing good deeds and Jewish traditions. We will seek to cultivate an appreciation for positive behaviors displayed at home. This connection between the home and school is as simple as writing a Mitzvah Note.

4) Birthdays: Monthly class celebrations are held to honor the birthdays of our young students. Our teachers will be happy to have you come for lunch with the class and read a story. Although the staff prepares cupcakes, if you would like to volunteer to prepare the cupcakes at Chabad in honor of your child's birthday, please let us know. Parents of children with summer birthdays should contact the teachers to schedule a time to recognize their child, even though his/her birthday does not occur during the school year.

5) The Celebration of Shabbat: To celebrate the coming of the Shabbat, each Friday a special Shabbat atmosphere is created. Several Hebrew songs and Shabbat movement songs bring a special energy into the class. As for the celebration of Shabbat, candles are lit, and we recite the blessings for the Kiddush grape juice and Challah. Every week a different boy and girl will be chosen to be the Ima (mommy) and Abba (daddy). The Shabbat celebration concludes with lunch and a special Shabbat story.

6) Challah on Friday: As we educate and excite our students about Shabbat, the children have the opportunity to make a Challah for the family. Of course, it takes practice and skill to braid the Challah. However, each child has a sense of self-pride when sharing their own Challah with their family.

7) Field trips: Field trips and excursions are made throughout the year to enrich the school program. Permission slips will be sent home and must be signed and returned before each trip. Parents are asked to help accompany and chaperon us on these outings. We always appreciate your voluntary assistance and urge you to participate whenever possible.

8) Rosh Chodesh - New Month Celebration: The Jewish months follow a lunar calendar. Hence, when the moon is just a small crescent, it is the beginning of a new Jewish month. A full moon means it's the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month. After we move to Standard Time, and the children can see the moon before their bedtime, we will introduce the celebration of Rosh Chodesh – the new month. A special song, snack, and activity will make this monthly celebration unique.

9) Jewish Holiday Family Celebrations: Prior to each Jewish holiday parents and extended family are encouraged to join our school for a fun-filled holiday experience, which includes a holiday presentation by the children, as well as an array of hands-on activities which will create memorable moments that you share during this quality time with your child.

10) Practical Life: The purpose of practical life exercises is to encourage conscious, orderly, controlled and functional knowledge out of the mass happenings in the real world. The practical life exercises help a child break down jobs at hand into easily manageable components. They all require real tools: silverware, wood, glass etc- all items that reflect and typify an actual home environment. In this way, they provide the child a chance to learn what practical living is, and how to manage it. The main areas in the practical life exercises involve Grace and Courtesy, Care of Person, Care of the Indoor Environment, and Art.

Grace and Courtesy Lessons in the language of respect (Derech Eretz) and lessons in control and coordination of movement are taught and practiced throughout the day for the children at Gani. Here are a few grace and courtesy lessons examples that are implemented very strongly in September, at the beginning of each school year, and extended throughout the school year and into summer school as well.

- Saying please and thank you
- Saying excuse me
- Politely blowing one's nose
- Politely covering one's mouth in a yawn or cough using the forearm
- Apologizing when appropriate

11) Sensorial: This area deals with size shape and color. The sensorial materials are designed to aid the child in training and refining his/her five senses. Children are exposed to concepts of size, shape and color and challenged to make judgments about them. By using the sensorial materials, the child learns to recognize similarities and differences; to discriminate between similar objects and to gradate similar objects. Each set of materials is used as carefully and precisely as possible. Precision at this stage prepares for later work in geometry.

12) English Language: Montessori children typically do not remember learning to read, as the environment is designed so that all experiences feed naturally toward the development of skills required for reading. Therefore, although reading, writing, spelling, and grammar are introduced to the child in an organized phonetic method, the presentation allows the child to acquire reading skills without realizing the effort.

13) Hebrew Language: Aleph Bet are always taught in order as opposed to English letters which are taught by most common sounds. After a child has mastered several letters the teacher will then begin introducing one vowel at a time beginning with Kamatz then Patach etc. Once a child has shown fluency in blending letters with vowels the teacher will introduce the blending of two letters then three etc with different vowels. Children will have both Montessori materials and traditional materials to work with. The formal introduction to reading will happen for all children in their Kindergarten year, all other children in the primary room, depending on their level will be introduced and encouraged to use the Hebrew language materials. For those children who exhibit reading skills earlier the teacher will provide materials to keep that child progressing.

14) Mathematics: Math is the study of numbers, quantities, shapes, and measurements and how they relate to one another. In Montessori math, the children are introduced to the concrete sensorial impressions of numbers, the decimal system and its functions, addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division. Using manipulative materials, the child explores these concepts physically, creating a basis for more abstract operations.

15) Geography: Geography is the study of the earth including its people, resources, climate and physical features.



Teaching Geography aids the child in developing a clear sense of spatial orientation. By giving sensorial impressions of the earth and showing children their relationship to it, Montessori lessons help develop a foundation of global awareness. Geography is a wonderful tool to introduce to children the different lands and waters Hashem created. Older children love working with these materials as they are both beautiful and complex. They begin to learn about Jewish culture and holy places all around the world.

16) Botany: Exploring the subject of Botany helps a child develop an appreciation for and an understanding of the life cycle and the beauty of Hashem's creatures. Through specific Botany works, the child develops a greater knowledge and understanding of the virtue of patience as the child is exposed to nature's seasonal changes and the growth cycle. These lessons occur at our outdoor classrooms

As the child builds success upon success with small tasks, he/she is able to go on to greater ones, mastering his/her small environment.

## **Parent Involvement & Open Communication**

Open communication between parent and teacher is essential. Your child will benefit tremendously from this communication. Avenues for communication and parent involvement are provided in the following manner:

1) The “Peek of the Week” newsletter will acquaint you with what is being taught in class. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of reading each Friday’s “Peek of the Week.” This is our way of informing you of special classroom activities. It is also our way of informing parents of important information regarding the upcoming week. Monthly letters from the Director will include pertinent information about school events and administrative updates.

2) Take the time to greet and talk with your child’s teacher. If you would like to have more than the normal short chat, please feel free to set up a suitable time to talk when the teacher can give you her undivided attention.

3) A bulletin board is available with announcements for you to view and read. Please take the time to scan the parent bulletin board regularly to keep informed of upcoming happenings or announcements. In addition, weekly lesson plans are posted for your review.

4) Parent involvement increases the success of our preschool. If you have a talent, skill or occupation that would interest preschoolers, please let us know. Attached to the info packet is a parent volunteer sign up sheet for parents to select areas of interest.

5) Parents are our partners in education. Parents are expected to provide 10 hours of service over the year. This includes helping with laundry, field trips, fundraisers and special events. We appreciate and need your help. Additionally we need the following:

- Parent volunteer Coordinator – lines up helpers for special projects, and acts as a liaison between staff and parents as needed.
- Sharing your special talents, interest, vocation
- Sewing, working with photos, cooking, formatting weekly newsletter, etc.

## **Field Trips**

For our preschool class (ages 2-4), there will be two educational field trips that will be implemented throughout the year. Each field trip has an educational goal and purpose and after each field trip, a follow up activity is done in the classroom. Parent involvement with safety and transportation is crucial for the success of these outings. Permission slips are to be sent home prior to each field trip. State regulations are followed regarding car seats and seatbelts, as well as making several headcounts during the field trip. Parents who volunteer to drive other children must submit copies of their driver’s license and their vehicle insurance card. Prior to departing on a field trip children will be reminded of basic safety rules.

## **Conferences/Grievances**

Parent-Teacher conferences are held annually in the latter part of January to discuss the developmental progress of your child. However, please feel free to arrange a meeting whenever an individual concern arises. These informal one-on-one meetings provide a way to clear up any misunderstandings. Please realize that to voice your concern is perfectly okay, and all we request is that it be done respectfully. Should you have any questions regarding your child's class that you feel should be dealt with immediately, please contact the following professionals in this order:

- 1) Ziva Rubinstein
- 2) Program director and site manager Nechama Farkash
- 3) Rabbi Farkash, Executive Director of Chabad of the Central Cascades

## **Health Policies**

The health of your child is important to you as well as to our staff. It is your responsibility to determine that your child is physically well enough to come to preschool. If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child home:

- he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24-hour period
- he/she is within the first 24-hour period of taking an antibiotic
- he/she has a colored nasal discharge
- he/she has a constant cough
- he/she has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (red eye, diarrhea, flu)
- he/she is fussy, cranky, or tired and generally not behaving normally

Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness. Please notify the school at once if your child does have a communicable disease. Keeping your child at home will allow your child to recuperate with quiet rest and your special TLC. In addition, it will protect the well being of our staff members, who are very dear to the children, and will further protect any staff member or classmate who has a weak immune system.

If your child becomes sick during school hours, and exhibits any of the aforementioned symptoms, or is just not feeling up to par and not enjoying the day, we will set up a safe and comfortable isolated area where your child can rest until you arrive. If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact on your registration form will be called. The law prohibits us from administering medicine, creams or lotions (even non-prescription), unless it is specifically labeled with your child's name, doctor's name, and parent's name. Parents must also sign an authorization form stating administration and dosage. Forms for this purpose will be available at the preschool.

At enrollment we must have on record a current health form and immunization record, which your child's doctor

should fill out. It is imperative that you immediately notify the school regarding changes in your home telephone, cell phone, or beeper. In the event of an emergency it will assure that we are able to contact you immediately. Children will be transported by paramedics to an appropriate health care facility. Chabad staff will not transport sick or injured children.

For the parents of mildly sick children who need childcare, Sarasota Memorial Hospital has a program entitled “Kids Under the Weather”. Pre-registration is necessary. For further information call 917-7500.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice are not a threat to our health, but can be a nuisance. Control of head lice is a shared responsibility of both parents and the school. Parents can help limit the problem by checking their child’s head regularly. If lice or nits are found, the school must be notified. A child who has had head lice will be permitted to return following a treatment and lice check by the Preschool Director or her agent. Our state laws mandate that parents show verification that an initial treatment has occurred and that a second treatment will take place 10 days later. (Box tops, receipts, empty bottle, or signed note by parent are the various modes of verification.)

### **Lunch, Nutrition & Peanut / Nut Awareness School Policy**

Lunch begins at 12:00 p.m. Please pack a nutritious lunch and carefully select your child’s foods, trying to send in a lunch made up of four food groups. Since you provide your child’s lunch, we rely on you to help us adhere to the kosher dietary laws. Please send only dairy or pareve lunches. No meat lunches will be allowed. As we try to encourage proper and healthful eating habits, please do not send any candy or high calorie treats. A list of lunch ideas and suggestions is attached as an addendum to this handbook. In order for you to make note of how much your child has eaten for lunch, and which foods your child is most enjoying, we will help your child pack up his/her remaining lunch.

It is imperative that you remember our school has a NUT AWARENESS policy. The added vigilance would be in affect only if there is a child enrolled with nut allergies: The simple act of smelling nuts or being touched by someone with a trace of peanut butter can trigger a severe allergic reaction (with, G-d forbid, serious consequences). If your child had a peanut butter sandwich for breakfast, please make sure that his/her hands and face are thoroughly washed. Lunch snacks (and granola bars) should be checked to ensure that they are completely nut free. All foods and drinks that you as the parent select, should have a kosher symbol. Kosher symbols include: OU, OK, triangle K, star K or just a K. Questions regarding Kosher symbols should be brought to your child’s teacher and/or director. Morning and afternoon snacks provided by Chabad Preschool are made of up of two food groups and will include: water, with pretzels or graham crackers and raisins.

If your child is allergic to any foods or has a special dietary requirement, please be sure to indicate it on your child’s registration form.

## Tuition Payments

The annual tuition fee is divided into 10 installments and is paid with 10 post-dated checks for the first of each month from September through June (first month and last month check are non refundable) or by an automated credit card. Together with this handbook and info packet, you should receive a tuition payment plan form, which must be submitted to the office prior to enrollment. For any check not honored by the bank there will be a \$35.00 fee. Parents or guardians who allow their account to become delinquent will have their child terminated from our program. Please note that the tuition is an annual fee and there are no credits or make up days for illness, holidays or family vacations. Please realize that at Chabad of the Central Cascades we strive to maintain professional and ethical standards, and we can not allow make up days for one child and not another. Please realize that your request for make up days will be denied. Also, prior to enrolling please carefully review the preschool calendar, making note of the days our school is not in session, and have backup childcare plans if necessary. (Our school is out of session for the following Jewish and legal holidays: Labor Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, MLK Day, Presidents Day, Passover/Spring Break, Shavuot and Memorial Day.

## Late Fees

Pick up times are at 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. (earlier during winter Friday schedule). We realize that emergencies and/or heavy traffic occur at times. In such cases where a parent is late, a ten - minute grace period will be given at no additional cost. After 12:40 p.m., there will be a five - dollar late fee charged for every 5-minute interval. This fee should be given directly to the teacher who has stayed late with your child. **Please realize that the 10-minute grace period is merely a gesture and should not be steadily utilized as 10 more minutes of childcare.** It is during this time that our teachers are paid to tidy up their classroom in preparation for the next day.

## Withdrawal Policy

We will make every effort to see that your child's needs are being nurtured each and every day. If, however, you choose to withdraw your child from our program, parents are required to give the school two weeks advance notice. Refunds are not given under any circumstances.

## Change of Schedule

If a parent should desire to change a student's schedule in any way, whether it be to add days or an afternoon, it will be necessary for the parent to receive a note from the Secretary indicating that payment has been made for the change in schedule.

## **Discipline Policy**

Our program promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. To accomplish our goal the following techniques are used on a daily basis:

- 1) Prevention & Positive Reinforcement: Providing a daily routine, a sense of security and constantly praising and reinforcing appropriate behavior.
- 2) Setting Limits: Simple rules are established and consistently followed. A poster with five simple class rules is always displayed in the classroom.
- 3) Problem Solving: We encourage the child to verbalize and use logical reasoning and consequences as the means of solving the problem at hand.
- 4) Remove Child From Situation: After all positive techniques have been referred to, the last alternative is to remove the child from the situation till he/she has relaxed and calmed down and is capable of returning to the group cooperatively. Physical restraint may only be used to protect a child from hurting himself/herself, or from hurting others.
- 5) Corporal punishment, including spanking, hitting, swatting, shaking or physical punishment of any kind, is NEVER allowed, nor is the withholding of food.
- 6) Our goal is to help each child:
  - Learn to make good choices
  - Learn to use his/her words
  - Learn problem solving skills
  - Learn basic human values of respect (kavod), trust, responsibility, honesty (Emet), and caring for others.

Your child is expected to meet an acceptable standard of behavior as set by the teacher. If your child's behavior falls below standard, you will be informed. Please note, that if after a reasonable period of time a child is not able to adjust to the demands of the group, the class schedule, or if there are special needs that Chabad Preschool is not able to meet, parents may choose or be asked to withdraw their child.

## **Potty Training Policy**

Children who enter the Preschool class must be completely potty trained. For children in the Toddler class, when a parent feels that their child is developmentally ready to use the potty, the child should be sent to school in pull-ups rather than diapers. This allows us to easily assist your child with the toileting process. All toddlers go the bathroom every 2 hours. When you feel your child is able to make the transition to be fully potty trained, schedule a time to discuss this with your child's teacher, and we will arrange for your child to go to the bathroom

on an hourly basis. From our past experiences we have seen this plan boost self-confidence, and attain potty training success.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

All Chabad Preschool staff members are required by law to report suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect allegations are reported to the Central Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). If a parent suspects child abuse or neglect by a staff member please notify the director immediately. Parents may also contact the child abuse hotline directly.

### **Releasing Of A Child**

Children are released only to their parents or to people stated in writing on the child's registration form. It is imperative that you notify the school if someone else will be picking up your child. For the release of a child to someone we did not personally meet, our staff has been instructed to ask for photo identification.

### **Pick Up & Drop Off**

When bringing or picking up your child, please park your car in the parking lot. If the north parking lot is full, please park in the parking lot to the south. Parking alongside the building poses a hazard to the children and to your vehicle. For assurance of safety, please park your car prior to entering the building.

Children should not be allowed to run in the parking lot, and should be brought into the classroom with a parent. The parent or guardian who brings and takes the child into the classroom must sign the child in and out on the attendance roster placed at the entrance to each classroom. Signing in and out is as simple as noting the time of your arrival and departure and placing your initials beside the time. This is a safety measure we strictly heed to, and request your full cooperation.

During drop off and pick up please realize that the care of the children is the teacher's first and foremost responsibility. Please respect the teachers by keeping the morning and afternoon "chit chat" to a minimum, so as not to distract the teacher from her primary responsibility of caring for the children. Should you at any time wish to have a longer talk with a teacher, please request from the teacher to set up a suitable time to discuss any question or concern.

## **Clothing**

Children should wear clothing that is appropriate for floor activities and messy art. Although we use washable paints and markers, please don't send your child in clothing that would disappoint you if it gets dirty. Also, please be sure your child's clothes are easily managed during toileting. Hard to close snaps, belts, and overalls that have buckles, should be avoided. A young child's self esteem is enhanced when he or she can be independently successful.

Since children enjoy running and playing on the outdoor playground, we discourage children from wearing flip-flops or sandals that do not provide adequate support. In addition, children get frustrated when mulch gets stuck in their sandals. We strongly advise parents to make sure their child is wearing socks even during the summer season. Children love the freedom and gross motor opportunity that they gain from outdoor play, and by wearing a strong closed shoe (sneaker), we can bolster this wonderful opportunity. As a safety precaution, all children will be required to wear a hat during outdoor play. Please make sure to bring a hat that can stay in school. Please label all hats, sweaters, and clothing that stay in your child's cubby or on the classroom hooks. Labeling will assist the teachers in determining ownership of these articles of clothing.

## **Toys From Home**

Toys and items of value should remain at home. We cannot assume responsibility for materials brought from home. Furthermore, we have found that toys from home are hard to share, and create a distraction to the class atmosphere. In the Preschool class (ages 3-4), the teacher may notify you of the show & tell schedule. When your child has a cherished item, please suggest that it be left in the car seat or placed in his/her classroom cubby.

## **Children's Playground Rules**

For safety and the benefit of the children, we have established a few playground rules, which we would like you to review with your child. These rules are hung outside on the playground, and are referred to by the staff as they provide gentle reminders to the children about our rules.

1. Hands to yourself.
2. Mulch stays on the ground.
3. Walk around the swing area.
4. Fence is not for climbing.
5. Help clean up.
6. Sand stays in the sand table (water/water table).
7. Feet first on the slide.
8. The water fountain is only for drinking water.



## **Birthdays**

At Chabad Preschool birthdays are celebrated once a month. Cupcakes are prepared by our staff and are usually served after lunch. The dates for these monthly birthday celebrations are set at the beginning of the school year, and prior to your child's preschool birthday celebration, you will be notified. Many parents have come in for lunch, to spend time with their child, read a book to the class, and take memorable photographs. To honor their child's birthday, parents are encouraged to donate a book, puzzle, toy or game to the classroom. If you wish to donate an item, the classroom teacher can give you ideas of what the class would enjoy.

## **Separation Anxiety**

For children who are new to the preschool experience, please realize that it is very common for children to display signs of separation anxiety. Please realize that our goal is to help you and your child go through the initial transition comfortably. Please realize that if after a parent leaves, a child is crying uncontrollably for more than one half hour, we will call you. Parents are always welcome to stay in the classroom. However, after saying a final good-bye, you are welcome to relax and enjoy a cup of coffee in the social hall, or relax with a book from our Judaic library. Additionally, if a child has a difficult time separating from one parent, you may want to try to have another parent or relative drop off your child. Also, for children having separation difficulty, we recommend picking them up a bit earlier for the first few days. Most times, after the parent leaves, the child becomes absorbed with toys and the environment, and is free of any apprehension. Having a family photo brought into school on the first day of school, helps us bridge the school - home connection.

- Establish a good bye routine. This can be "two kisses and a hug and then I must go" or other unique patterns like kissing a hand to save the kiss. It is ok to stay a few minutes. However, once you say good bye you need to mean it! Responding to the plea to stay after you have gone through "your routine" nullifies its effectiveness as a separation tool to help. It also sends the message that you are worried that he/she will not be ok.
- Help your child choose an activity he/she will move to as you leave
- Practice your good-bye routine or review your expectation prior to arriving. For example, "Remember, after....I will need to go and you can..."
- Validate your child's feelings. "You miss me when I have to go. I am going to miss you too, but I know you will have a fun day at school"
- Leave security toys in the car. "Puppy dog will be waiting for you" (we can not be responsible for personal toys that come to school)

## **Respect**

Please respect the religious nature of our school in the following ways:

- Although our preschool calendar respects the legal holidays, we are a Jewish preschool and would like to request that our parents help remind their children that Halloween and other non-Jewish holidays are not celebrated at Chabad Jewish Preschool.
- Please review and respect our kosher policy, and if you have any questions, they can be directed to the teacher or director. Let us address your questions and assure that there is a mutual understanding.

Your respect is essential in allowing us to fulfill our goals, and we thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### **Substitutes**

From time to time, when our teachers are out sick, or take a family vacation, it is necessary for us to secure a substitute. If you would like to assist in this capacity, please speak to the Preschool Director. Substituting is a paid position.

### **Severe Weather Watch**

In cases of severe weather such as snow or power outages, the preschool will close when the public schools or county offices close. Staff will be kept informed and parents will be notified. Parents will be told to keep themselves informed throughout the day and to be prepared to pick up their child within 1 hour of school closings.

### **Natural Disasters**

Gani has an emergency preparedness program. Each child should bring in a Ziploc bag two water bottles and 3 nonperishable snacks in case of an emergency situation

### **Summer program**

Gani preschool of the arts will run a two-four week summer program as well. Fee is not part of the yearly tuition.

### **Simple Suggestions For Parents To Help Make Preschool A Happy Experience**

- 1) See that your child has sufficient rest and sleep – usually 12 or 13 hours for the two and a half to three year old.
- 2) To make your child more comfortable, provide simple clothing that is free of complicated belts and closures.
- 3) Since children get very involved with their art projects, please provide clothing that is washable.
- 4) Please realize the validity and significance of play, and the importance of what is learned.

- 5) Think of our beautiful playground; provide clothing and shoes that are sturdy. Flip flops and shoes without a back have a tendency to fall off, and do not allow the child to enjoy outdoor play to its fullest. Wearing socks will assure that mulch and dirt do not bother your child while playing on the playground.
- 6) Send your child off to school in a happy frame of mind and show interest in what he/she does at school and what he/she is learning.
- 7) Encourage your child to talk about what he/she did in school. When receiving an answer like “I don’t know” or “nothing”, you can prompt your child by asking more specific questions. (What did you eat for lunch? What song did you sing at group time? Etc...)
- 8) Encourage your child to frequently wash hands to ward off the spread of germs.
- 9) Get involved, volunteer your time, and share a professional interest or hobby with our school. Parents who volunteer are known to positively affect their child’s success in school.
- 10) Get to know your child’s teacher and keep open communication throughout the school year. Please remember that when parents and preschool staff work together, we can help your child develop to his or her full potential.

### Chabad Preschool Calendar 2013-14

**Please note:** Chabad Preschool observes Jewish and Legal holidays. As per the parent handbook, reimbursements or additional days are not given for any days your child is not in preschool due to illness, holiday or family vacation.

Friday, August 30th	Meet the Teachers - Preschool Orientation Day
Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	No Preschool – Labor Day
Tuesday, September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	First day of Preschool
Wednesday – Friday September 4-6	No Preschool – Rosh Hashana
Friday September 13	No Preschool – Erev Yom Kippur/YK
Thursday - Friday September 19-20	No preschool – Sukkot.
Wednesday – Friday, September 25-27	No preschool – Hoshana Rabah - Simchat Torah
Wednesday October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Parent Open House, curriculum evening
Tuesday – November 26 <sup>th</sup> ,	Afternoon Parent teacher conferences
Wed - Friday, November 27, 29	No preschool - Thanksgiving Break
Thursday December 5 <sup>th</sup>	Parent teacher conferences
December 23 <sup>rd</sup> – January 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2014	No preschool – winter break*
Monday January 20 <sup>th</sup> 2014	No preschool – MLK day*
Monday February 17 <sup>th</sup>	No preschool – Presidents Day
Monday April 14 <sup>th</sup> -April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	No preschool – Pessach - spring break
Monday , May 26 <sup>th</sup>	No preschool – Memorial Day
Tuesday, May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Afternoon Parent Teacher conferences.
Wed - Thursday June 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup>	No preschool – Shavuot break
Thursday June 19 <sup>th</sup> 2014	Last day of Preschool
Friday June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher In-Service

\*winter camp option for additional cost of \$50 for a full day, three child minimum

## **Student Essentials To Be Brought In At Orientation**

### **Toddler Room (Ages 2) Essentials**

- a change of clothing in a labeled zip lock plastic bag
- completion of all necessary preschool forms & notarized form
- child's health form
- immunization form
- copy of child's or family's insurance card
- 2 boxes of baby wipes (We will ask for more on an as needed basis)
- 2 container sanitizing wipes (must say: kills 99.9% of germs)
- a weekly supply of diapers
- 4 boxes tissues
- 1 box bandaids
- a recent photo of your child
- a recent family photo
- hat for outdoor play

### **Preschool Room (Ages 3-4) Essentials**

- a change of clothing in a labeled zip lock plastic bag
- completion of all necessary preschool forms & notarized form
- child's health form – yellow form (expires every 2 years)
- immunization form – blue form (should expire before Kindergarten entry)
- copy of child's or family's insurance card
- 2 boxes of baby wipes
- 4 boxes of tissues
- 4 container sanitizing wipes (must say: kills 99.9% of germs)
- 1 disposable camera with flash
- 1 box bandaids
- a recent photo of your child

- a recent family photo
- hat for outdoor play

(Parent Handbook Addendum # 3)

### Chabad Preschool Lunch Ideas

**Dairy or Pareve Only - No meat lunches allowed. Please do not send in any candy. Remember, we are a “nut aware” school. We will assess yearly if it will be a nut-free year. Any packaged product sent in your child’s lunch box must have a kosher symbol. Should you have any further questions, feel free to speak to your child’s teacher or director.**

#### Sandwiches:

Cream cheese  
Tuna fish  
Jelly  
Egg or egg salad  
Margarine  
Peanut butter or substitute:

Sunbutter\*

#### General:

Yogurt  
Sliced cheese  
String cheese  
Cottage cheese  
Macaroni and cheese  
Bagel pizza  
Rice cakes

#### Drink:

Juice, milk or water

#### Fruits and Vegetables:

Sliced cucumbers  
Sliced tomatoes  
Celery sticks  
Melon cubes  
Fruit cups  
Apples  
Applesauce  
Grapes (cut please)

#### Treat:

Bread sticks  
Graham crackers  
Pretzels  
Pudding  
Jello



(Parent Handbook Addendum # 4)

### Notification of Changes in Child's Records

Please keep this form with your handbook and our program calendar. If a change occurs that should be noted on your child's records, please complete this form and bring it to the Director's office as soon as possible. It is imperative that we keep all our records updated so that you can be contacted in case of emergency.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make the following changes to my child's records**

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of home telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of father's work telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of father's cell phone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of mother's work telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change of mother's cell phone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change or additional persons to whom the child may be released (Name, Add. & Tel. #)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Change in marital status or living arrangements \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent or Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_