

**TEMPLE ISRAEL  
BARBARA K. LIPMAN EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Introduction**

We are delighted you have chosen Temple Israel's Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center for your child. The Early Learning Center offers a unique educational opportunity that is both enriching and fulfilling. In our classrooms the teacher-pupil ratio is low, in compliance with NAEYC standards (National Association for the Education of Young Children). All children receive individualized attention to enhance their self-esteem and capacity for learning. Parent communication and interaction with the teachers, staff and administrators is encouraged to ensure a smooth transition from home to school for every child. Parent collaboration is important to us; please do not hesitate to discuss any questions, suggestions or concerns you may have.

Our classrooms have been configured especially for very young children. The rooms are spacious and bright, equipped to meet the developmentally appropriate needs of the children they serve. Each class has a library corner and other specialty areas such as writing, language, science and manipulative areas. The Jr-K and Kindergarten rooms have computers, ready with age appropriate software. The playground features colorful and safe play equipment to help develop gross motor skills and social interaction. The Scheidt Family Center serves as the bicycle riding area on rainy days.

This handbook is designed to provide you with information about the program and policies, and answer any questions you may have about our Early Learning Center. If you have additional questions, or would like to arrange for a private tour or interview, please call the Director at 937-2784.

**History**

In 1987 Temple Israel realized there was a need to provide an enriching Jewish early childhood educational program within the walls of the Temple facility. Because of the highly successful program of the Temple Sisterhood's Mother's Day Out, surveys were made regarding the feasibility of creating a preschool. Private funding by anonymous donors made possible the opening of the school with one class for three year olds the fall of 1988. With adjustments made to satisfy DHS regulations, a senior teacher and an assistant teacher were hired for the first year. Additional teachers were hired later as the program expanded. We now care for children as young as nine months and educate children through kindergarten, sending them off well prepared for first grade.

**Philosophy**

***Our mission is to provide for the social, emotional, and cognitive growth of the young child in a Judaic setting.***

Temple Israel Early Learning Center recognizes that every child is a person of unique worth. The Early Learning Center embraces all children as they are and implements developmentally appropriate practices at individualized rates of learning. We provide an atmosphere where children are valued for their curiosity, their experiences and their ability to learn through play. The tenets and values of Judaism are woven into our daily curriculum, enhanced by integrating our clergy into the daily life of the preschool.

At the Early Learning Center, families are valued for their individualized bonds to Judaism and Jewish traditions, their commitment to work and home, and their dreams for their children. Our nurturing teachers and staff take delight in children's development and share a love for learning, exploring, discovering and creating. The Early Learning Center is an environment where children are cherished and treasured.

## Application and Enrollment

Enrollment begins at the annual Open House, usually held in December. Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Priority is given to currently enrolled students and Temple members, and then enrollment is opened to the community. The full deposit must be received in order to reserve a space for your child. Registration is complete when accompanied by the application and the tuition deposit. Note that Temple member families and previously enrolled families must be in good financial standing with the Temple in order to enroll.

Enrollment deadline for currently enrolled students and Temple members for the following school year is January 31. After January 31 enrollment is open to the community. Fifty percent of the full year's tuition is due and payable by May 15. Due dates for further tuition payments are listed on the application form. Amex, Visa or MasterCard payments will be accepted according to the conditions of the enrollment contract. The Director may be contacted for any questions about tuition payment plans. Parent signature on the Enrollment Agreement obligates said parent for payment for the entire year.

To secure a place in the classroom, parents must complete the application/contract form. These forms must be signed and returned with a \$50.00 non-refundable application fee. Tuition deposit is also due at the time of registration. The tuition deposit is \$400 for all classes. Tuition deposit is non-refundable but may be applied to the last tuition payment. A one-time activity fee of \$50.00 covers snacks, beverages, special Shabbat programs, and TIPPS activities for all children. Total due upon registration is \$500.

Items included in tuition are books, classroom materials, newsletter, transcripts, specialists' programs, cultural arts and special events, TIPPS programs, snacks, rest mat. Items not included in tuition are school pictures, photo album, drop-in Early Care, After Care, After School Clubs, optional speech/hearing or vision screenings. Additionally, families may be asked to also provide the following: crayons, glue and other school supplies, box of tissues and/or wipes.

***Your signed contract is binding for all fees. Student grades, achievement test scores and recommendation forms are held pending completion of all payments.***

Financial assistance for Kindergarten is available through the Memphis Jewish Federation (767-7100).

Upon enrollment and receipt of appropriate deposit, a packet of information will be sent containing the following forms:

1. Current health form to be completed by M.D.
2. Family Information and Emergency Authorization Forms

The deadline for return of these forms is May 15. The State Health Department requires immunization records that must be completed and signed by the child's physician. All children attending the Early Learning Center must be immunized.

## CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

### Sequence of Programs

<u>Noah's Ark</u>	Infants and toddlers from 9 months through 36 months
<u>Starboard</u>	Children turning three years old between October 1 - February 28
<u>Pre-K</u>	Children will be three years old on or before September 30
<u>Jr-K</u>	Children will be four years old on or before September 30
<u>Kindergarten</u>	Children will be five years old on or before September 30

## Early Childhood Curriculum

At the Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center we implement curriculum that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, comprehensive, and promotes positive outcomes for all young children.

### ***Our Indicators of Effective Curriculum***

- Children are active and engaged.
- Goals are clear and shared by all.
- Curriculum is evidence-based.
- Valued content is learned through investigation and focused, intentional teaching.
- Curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences.
- Curriculum is comprehensive.
- Professional standards validate the curriculum's subject-matter content.

The concept of early literacy has had a significant impact on the approaches we use to teach literacy in our early childhood program. The theory of early literacy developed through research from such diverse fields as child development, psychology, education, linguistics and sociology. Early literacy envelops the thought that the development of early reading takes place within the child. Literacy refers to the interrelatedness of language – speaking, listening, reading and writing. The concept of early literacy encompasses the following features:

1. Learning to read and write begins very early in life.
2. Reading and writing develop concurrently in young children.
3. Literacy develops from real life situations -- authentic reading and writing experiences are embedded in play for a meaningful purpose.
4. Children learn literacy through active engagement.
5. Being read to plays a special role in the literacy development of the young child.
6. Learning to read and write is a developmental process. Children pass through the stages in a variety of ways and at different ages.

Many preschools fall into the trap of getting children ready to learn to read and write. This emphasis is not supported by the research on literacy and how children learn. When the environment presents books, paper and pencil activities for young children, it is found that they display a natural affinity for them. Activities are open ended so that children may build upon the knowledge already acquired.

This point of view assumes that when a child arrives at school he already knows a great deal about language and literacy. The role of the teacher in the early literacy print rich classroom becomes one of setting up the environment to support self-generated, self-motivated and self-regulated learning. For a more detailed description of early childhood literacy and how we integrate this philosophy into our teaching, please refer to the Curriculum Guide. The early literacy educational approach is consistent with the best practices recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and other guidelines for developmentally based programs.

The Pre-K literacy program includes *Handwriting Without Tears* and *The Letter People*, published by Abrams & Co. The Jr-K and kindergarten classes use *Reading Street* by Pearson-Scott Foresman. Additionally, *Everyday Math*, published by the Wright Group of McGraw Hill is implemented in the kindergarten class. For more specific information about these curriculum programs, please see their respective websites:

<http://www.hwtears.com>

[www.abramslearningtrends.com](http://www.abramslearningtrends.com)

<http://www.Scottforesman.com>

<http://everydaymath.uchicago.edu>

## **High Scope Noah's Ark and Starboard Curriculum**

High/Scope's educational approach emphasizes "active learning." Active learning means students have direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. Children's interests and choices are at the heart of High/Scope programs. They construct their own knowledge through interactions with the world and the people around them. Children take the first step in the learning process by making choices and following through on their plans and decisions. Teachers and caregivers offer physical, emotional, and intellectual support. In active learning settings, adults expand children's thinking with diverse materials and nurturing interactions.

The Infant-Toddler Curriculum is based on the principle that children learn best through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. During this active learning process, infants and toddlers are encouraged to discover the world around them by exploring and playing. Learning and development are anchored by long-term, trusting relationships with caregivers, who are close at hand to support the children as they play. Adults scaffold further learning as they interact with children throughout the day. The space and materials in High/Scope infant-toddler settings are arranged to promote active learning within a safe, comfortable and secure environment. Each center is divided into areas organized around specific kinds of play and care, such as small toy area, book area, movement area, art area and spaces for diapering, meals, and naps.

The Infant-Toddler Child Observation Record (COR) enables caregivers and administrators to assess each child's progress and plan educational experiences that will encourage further learning. This assessment is designed to coordinate with the High/Scope Preschool COR, which is used in Starboard.

The High/Scope educational approach is consistent with the best practices recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and other guidelines for developmentally based programs.

<http://www.highscope.org>

### **Assessment**

At the Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center, we make ethical, appropriate, valid and reliable assessment a central part of our early childhood program. To assess young children's strengths, progress, and needs, we use assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children's daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes: (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.

The purpose of assessment is for screening for developmental progress or developmental delay, identifying children's strengths and needs, improving curriculum and teacher effectiveness, and communicating and collaborating with families. A complete review of the methods and uses of assessment is available upon request, in the administrator's office files.

### **Special Programs**

Library Time is available for Starboard through kindergarten. Kindergarten may sign out library books to take home on a weekly basis.

Judaic Liturgy and Music is taught once a week by our Cantor. The children learn holiday songs, prayers and traditions while singing along to traditional and non-traditional tunes.

Music and Movement Music integrates music with dance and drama through listening, imitating movements, coordination, instruments, and sequencing.

Shabbat is celebrated every Friday with candle lighting, prayers, and music. Our Rabbis delight the children with Torah stories that provide a rich opportunity for learning Jewish values and traditions. Youngsters bring a penny for Tzedakah (charity), which is collected throughout the year and donated to a charity chosen by the children, along with their teachers.

Cultural Arts and Special Events are funded through the Haas Family Endowment and enable us to bring to the preschool such programs as Opera Memphis, the Botanic Gardens, Memphis Zoo WOW, Playhouse on the Square, Israeli workshops, and more.

Gigglebytes is our computer learning program, provided by the Whole Child Learning Co. Small groups of children, from Pre-K through kindergarten receive weekly computer instruction with the *Gigglebytes* computer teacher in our technology center.

Torah Alive! is the first exposure many children have to learning about Torah stories. Using contemporary early childhood techniques, ancient text will be presented that has been part of our tradition, from generation to generation. *Torah Alive!* is available for Jr-K and kindergarten.

## **YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM**

### **Class Admission Policies and Placement Requests**

The admission policy of Temple Israel Early Learning Center is non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, sex or national origin. All classes are formed based on the child's age as of September 30. This is in accordance with the age guidelines of Shelby County Schools, Memphis City Schools and the State of Tennessee Department of Education.

Pre-K students are expected to be completely and fully toilet-trained. The child must be able to clearly verbalize needs and be able to independently handle all toileting chores unassisted. Diapers and pull-ups are not permissible in Pre-K, nor are pacifiers or sippy cups.

Class placements are determined by the following criteria:

- First come, first served according to the date of your signed application and full deposit
- Discussion and recommendations of previous teachers
- Compatible combination of ability levels in the group
- Emotional and social needs of individual children
- Even gender mix in the group; and 3 vs. 5 day attendance
- Temple member, or current ELC family, in good financial standing with the business office
- Parent request, made in writing, at the time of application accompanied by registration fee

Every possible request will be seriously considered and discussed amongst administration and faculty. Decisions are not arbitrary and extreme effort will be made to accommodate the wishes of all families, however in some cases, requests may not be granted.

The appropriate procedure will be as follows:

1. Requests for specific teachers or for your child to be in the same class as a particular friend, must be made ***in writing***.
2. Written requests must be submitted with completed application form
3. Any requests must also be accompanied with both the application fee and the appropriate tuition deposit

4. The family's account must be in good financial standing
5. Deadline for requests is February 28

The Temple Israel ELC reserves the right, at all times and for any cause that it may consider sufficient, to request the withdrawal of a student.

### **Classroom Behavior Management**

The ELC approach to discipline is through conflict resolution processes, and classroom behavior management procedures. As part of social development and relations with others, children will be guided to

- Try alternative methods to solve a problem
- Join with others in activities
- Participate in routines
- Try negotiation or other socially acceptable means
- Initiate and sustain interaction
- Express feelings in acceptable ways

When parents and teachers use similar approaches to discipline, it creates yet another connection between home and school for your child. Teachers appreciate your support and are always willing to share with you the strategies that work well with your child at school.

### **Biting**

Current research suggests that biting may be a normal developmental phase for infants and toddlers, but when it happens, it can be scary and frustrating for everyone involved. Because of the developmental nature of most biting, experts stress that biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or teachers.

Experts believe that biting in toddlers between 12 and 36 months old is a form of communication (i.e., to communicate frustration while learning social, language, and self-control skills). Toddlers seldom plan ahead, but rather they see and act on what they are experiencing at the moment. Toddlers do not have the language necessary to control a situation, or their attempts at communication are not understood or respected. Biting becomes a powerful way to communicate with and control others and the environment. Biting demonstrates autonomy and is a quick way to get a toy or attention. Many toddlers do not yet understand sharing, or that touch can hurt, and they need to learn other ways to communicate besides biting.

Because theorists think that biting may be related to the child's developmental stage, punishment in general is not advised either at home or in a child care center. Instead, experts recommend focusing attention on the victim, shielding the victim from the biter, initiating first aid measures as necessary, and consoling the victim. The literature strongly suggests that caregivers and parents not bite the child back as a punishment or to show the child how it feels to be bitten.

For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. Our staff members quickly remove the biter from the situation without dramatic movements, attention, or an emotional response that could provide negative reinforcement to the biter. Parents and caregivers can tell the biter that "biting is not OK," "I can't let you hurt your friends," etc. Toddlers in particular may not understand time-out, but caregivers need to make sure that the biter is not near other children until he or she has calmed down and can be redirected to other play.

Overall, we strive to maintain positive relationships with parents during biting outbreaks, to keep parents informed of the strategies being employed, to empathize with parents of both biters and victims

regarding their feelings, and to communicate to parents the staff training and intervention efforts that are occurring to remedy the problem. Guidance to children who bite should be provided with the goal of helping children develop inner control of their feelings and actions. A quick and consistent response at home and in the center can help children who bite learn to express their feelings in words so that they can become better able to control their behavior. A written report is completed for any biting incident and parents of both children are informed. Names of children who bite are not shared.

<http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics/biting.html>

### **Dress Code**

We expect parents to show good judgment in their choice for their children's school clothing. Children must be dressed so that they may participate in paint or messy activities without concern about getting dirty. Comfortable and appropriate footwear such as tennis shoes should be worn for daily activities. In the warmer weather, as sandals are worn, keep in mind that our safety surface in the playground is made of pea gravel. This gravel sneaks its way between the children's tiny toes. May we suggest socks with sandals, or an extra pair of tennis shoes kept in the cubby. Fashion shoes are dangerous and are not permitted (flip-flops, clogs, slides, etc.) A complete change of clothes including underwear, socks and a sweater shall be kept at school; remember to change these seasonally.

### **Children's Personal Items**

All children, from 9 months through kindergarten, should have a complete change of clothing, to keep at school. These may be sent in a Zip Loc bag, with each item labeled with the child's name.

Noah's Ark children will need the following:

- Package of diapers, pull-ups or underpants
- Lunch for the day, clearly marked with the child's name, sent in multi-divided plastic container.
- Sippy cups, or bottles, as needed
- Bibs for infants (9-18 months); bibs for toddlers, as needed
- Clean blanket, crib sheet for mat and soft stuffed doll or animal (no other toys are permitted from home)
- Nap time linens must be laundered weekly

Starboard, Pre-K, Jr-K and kindergarten children should bring to school in his/her bag every day the following items, clearly marked with the child's name:

- 3 pairs of underwear
- 2 pairs of socks
- 2 seasonal shirts
- 2 seasonal pants
- Starboard – package of diapers

***We cannot stress enough the importance of labeling all items with your child's name!***

### **DAILY PROCEDURES**

#### **School Day and Hours**

Classrooms for Starboard, Pre-K and Jr-K are offered on a three day or five day basis. The three-day class meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday; the five-day class meets Monday through Friday. Kindergarten meets five days a week from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Early Care for all ages is offered 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., five days a week. After Care is offered 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., five days a week. Prior

registration is mandatory for the Extended Care programs. Payment must be made at the time of registration.

Noah's Ark program days are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Parents may choose one, two, three, four or five days – space permitting. Early Care is available from 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. After Care is offered 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., five days a week.

### **Rest / Nap Time**

Tennessee State Department of Education regulations require children three years old and under to have a supervised rest / nap time daily. Starboard and Pre-K children may bring a sheet and blanket, or a stuffed animal. Jr-K children will have a quiet rest period after lunch each day. Mats are provided for toddlers at nap / rest time; infants sleep in cribs. Parents must bring a clean, crib size blanket and sheet daily, clearly marked with their child's name. Blankets must be laundered at home weekly and returned the next day that the child attends. A favorite soft toy (stuffed doll or animal) may be brought for nap time. These items should be labeled and washed frequently.

### **Arrival and Departure Starboard through Kindergarten**

The school day begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. **Kindergarten children are considered tardy after 9:05 a.m.**, in compliance with standards set by the Tennessee State Department of Education. An adult must sign the class sign-up sheet posted in the school office, accompany the child to the classroom each day and make contact with the teacher or assistant. Please indicate an emergency telephone number where you can be reached on that particular day. We urge parents to arrive with their children on time, as greeting and planning time is an extremely important introductory activity of the day. The children should be encouraged to place their own lunch boxes, backpacks and coats into their cubbies.

Teachers are preparing for the day between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. If you arrive early, please remain with your child in the hallway until the classroom doors open at **8:55**. We encourage families to register for Early Care if early coverage is needed.

Upon departure, please be sure to sign-out your child. Do not send an older child into the building to sign the child out for the day. If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child, the office must be notified in writing, in advance. Children will not be released to unknown or unauthorized adults. Previously authorized adults unknown to the office staff will be required to present valid ID. Please be sure that any authorized person has a car seat for your child.

### **Arrival and Departure Noah's Ark**

Parents must individually sign in each child every morning and indicate with whom the child will leave at dismissal time. Daily attendance roles are taken each morning and absentees noted. Role is taken periodically throughout the school day.

Teachers are preparing for the day between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. If you arrive early, please remain with your child in the hallway until the classroom doors open at **8:55**. We encourage families to register for Early Care if early coverage for children is needed.

The children are especially sensitive to the movement and mood of adults. To assist in creating and maintaining peaceful, calm transitions, please speak quietly and move softly whenever you are in the classroom. In an extended visit, we ask adult visitors to sit down – standing up means going away to young children. Tell your child goodbye before you leave and assure him / her that you will return later in the day.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child, the office must be notified in writing, in advance. Children will not be released to unknown or unauthorized adults. Previously authorized adults unknown to the office staff will be required to present valid ID. Please be sure that any authorized person has a car seat for your child.

### **Late Fees**

The school day ends promptly at 2:00. A late fee will be charged for pick-up after 2:05 p.m. The After Care program ends promptly at 6:00, when the building closes. Parents who are late in picking up their child will be charged twenty dollars (\$20) for any portion of an hour. Payment is due upon pick-up. In the case of a late carpool driver, each family involved will be charged a late fee. In a true emergency, of course, the ELC will make special arrangements to accommodate a child until he/she is picked-up. Habitual “emergencies” or habitual late pick-ups are not permitted.

### **Inclement Weather Procedures**

Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center will follow Memphis City School’s policy on snow / ice closings. For school closings and updates throughout the day, tune in to Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 13, Channel 24 and Channel 30.

### **Outdoor Play**

Weather permitting; all classes will spend time outside every day. Please send appropriate outerwear for the day, as the children will go outside if the temperature is above 32°. If your child is unable to play outside for any reason, it is advisable to keep him / her at home that day. There are no accommodations for an unwell child to play inside while the class is outside. Infants (9-18 months) will ride in the stroller outside only if weather conditions are optimal.

## **PARENTS**

### **Collaboration with Parents**

Parents are an integral component of any all-encompassing preschool program and can work in collaboration with teachers to coordinate the best educational setting for young children. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom with special activities, bring in materials for “recycling” into art projects, speak with and meet with teachers, support learning at home, read the ELC newsletter *WHISPER*, be present at class programs and special events, or volunteer as a class parent.

It is requested that preschool parents refrain from cell phone usage around children, while on the site of Temple Israel. This is the time for parents to attend to the needs of their children. We want to facilitate positive transitions and social-emotional attachments among our young children and those who care for them.

### **How to Address Concerns**

We encourage families to raise concerns and work collaboratively with staff to contribute to decisions about their child’s goals and activities. Parents are encouraged to communicate daily with staff, as well as attend regularly scheduled conferences to facilitate their role as primary decision makers for their child.

In order to find mutually satisfying solutions, we recommend the following procedure. First, we ask that parents speak with the child’s teacher. (A translator will be sought, if needed). If a mutually satisfying solution is not brought about, the parents may speak with the director. The director may negotiate a solution or may encourage families to obtain outside services. Services might include pediatric evaluation, speech and hearing evaluation, behavioral evaluation, etc. Finally, if no solution is determined parents may speak with the Director of Education.

## **Techniques for Parent-Teacher Interactions**

- Stop talking and listen! Stay calm!
- Re-state the other person's comments to ensure understanding.
- Use positive body language – maintain eye contact, nod, smile.
- Ask questions to clarify points.
- Control your emotions.
- Put yourself in the other's shoes. Try to better understand their point of view.
- Listen to how something is said. Inflection speaks more than mere words.
- Always remember, this is about a small child.
- Mutually come to a decision about the conflict. Put the decision in writing.
- Follow up with a note or a phone call.

### **TIPPS - Temple Israel Preschool Parents**

The TIPPS committee is comprised of parents of Early Learning Center children, toddlers and infants in all programs. TIPPS meets regularly throughout the school year. TIPPS coordinates special events, holiday and festival celebrations, assists with publicity and public relations, coordinates room parents and the class activities, provides parent liaison, and organizes fundraisers.

### **Early Learning Center Advisory Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to serve as a sounding board and serve as an advisory group to the director. The committee's main goals are advisory, marketing, recruitment and retention. Positions on the committee are by appointment only, pending board approval. If any parent is interested in serving on the committee, please contact the Director.

### **Communication with Home Starboard through Kindergarten**

Communication with the home is a cornerstone of the collaborative process. Once a month, teachers will send home calendars and Whisper newsletters. These will include upcoming events as well as information and reports from the class. You will receive weekly information pinned to your child's backpack in a "Wednesday Words" packet. We encourage daily communication amongst staff and families when you drop-off or pick-up your child. Families may meet with the director at any time, or by appointment. Additionally, we use group e-mail lists to send information.

Annually, there is a School Showcase open house with the Director, senior teachers, available clergy, teacher specialists and parents. This provides everyone the opportunity to preview the coming year and to become familiar with classrooms, teachers and programs.

### **Communication with Home Noah's Ark**

Caregivers and staff are here to be of support and service to parents, as well as to care for and nurture infants and toddlers during the hours at Noah's Ark. Families are encouraged to communicate daily with the child's teacher / caregiver. Please read the observation record at the end of each day, as well as the daily experience sheet. Milestones and bright moments observed during the day are brought to the attention of parents. Additionally, we use group e-mail lists to send information. Parents may also wish to communicate to us concerns, questions and any unusual circumstances in your child's life since the previous day. This includes any recent doctor's visits as well, especially if immunizations were received, so we might understand the sources of any discomfort. Noah's Ark families may meet with the director at any time, or by appointment.

### **Parent – Teacher Conferences**

Throughout the year, parents will meet formally with their child's teacher to discuss specific growth and progress in the developmentally appropriate educational strands, as stated in the ELC curriculum. Check the calendar for the two conference days scheduled for Starboard through kindergarten. Noah's

Ark conferences are scheduled in April. Arrangement times for parent conferences are made through each individual teacher via a sign-up list posted at the door. Additionally, parents may request a conference with a teacher or the director to discuss any concerns at any time. Parents will please make an appointment for such a special meeting time.

### **Parent Visitation**

The ELC boasts an “open door” policy and we always welcome parents during the school day. Parents may observe activities, join in with your child, speak with staff, and volunteer your time. Parents are especially welcome to join us for Shabbat and holiday luncheons and programs. *A parent must accompany all visiting children.*

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Safety**

The staff of the Early Learning Center work hard to maintain a safe environment for all children. Children are supervised at all times. Children are never alone. At least one teacher is present in each classroom when children arrive and depart. A phone is located in the office to allow teachers immediate ability to call for help in case of emergencies. At least one staff person working with each group of children is certified in Pediatric CPR and First Aid.

### **Security**

Faculty and staff will release children only to persons noted on the release form provided by the parent. If an emergency arises, the parent must provide written notification giving the pick-up person permission to take the child. Photo IDs are checked of anyone we do not recognize. Please let your family know this ahead of time so they won't be offended. Our priority is the safety of the children.

If there are custody issues involving your child, please provide the center with court papers indicating who has permission to pick-up the child. The ELC may not deny a parent access to their child without proper legal documentation. No child will be dismissed to any adult other than the parents unless we have prior written authorization.

Parents must individually sign in each child every morning and indicate with whom the child will leave at dismissal time. Daily attendance roles are reported to the office each morning and absentees noted. Role is taken periodically throughout the school day. Doors in the preschool wing are kept locked at all times and entrance is permitted at the school entrance only.

### **Procedure for Lost or Missing Children**

- Teacher re-counts number of children in group, using roll book and checking off each name.
- Teacher searches room, bathroom, closet, all secluded play areas in the room and on the playground or gym.
- Teacher notifies office personnel immediately.
- Every teacher is notified to re-count number of children, using roll book and checking off each name. Classes are to remain in their classrooms until further notice.
- Office staff conduct room by room search for lost/missing child. Office staff also search library, computer room, Scheidt Family Center and public rest rooms.
- If child is still not found, parents are called as well as 911.
- Continue with room by room search until child is found, or parents/police arrive.
- Document search in writing with date, time, name of child, name of teacher and results.

### **Evacuation Procedures**

Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure the safe, orderly and efficient evacuation of all occupants of the school using all available exits. Roll call is taken from the attendance register when the children are

in a safe place. Specialists and office staff have been alerted to assist with infants and toddlers during routine fire drills. The ELC also conducts tornado drills.

### **Lunch - Starboard through Kindergarten**

Children bring their own lunch to school. We are unable to heat up or refrigerate lunches. We recommend sending an icepack when needed. In preparing lunch for your child, try choosing fruits, veggies, yogurt and sandwiches. The ELC provides milk or water at snack and lunchtime. To ensure safety, all food and beverages brought from home are to be labeled with the child's name and the date. Snack is provided for all children at mid-morning and for those children attending after-care. Temple Israel follows Biblical Kashrut, so do not send in food containing pork or shellfish. Information relative to allergies must be included on the child's registration forms. It is **IMPERATIVE** that you inform us of any **food allergies** your child might have, such as peanut butter, milk, eggs, etc. Do not send nuts of any kind and no peanut butter. A meeting with the teacher before school begins will ensure that no child is served foods to which they may be allergic.

### **Lunch - Noah's Ark**

Children bring their own lunch to school. A clearly labeled sack or lunch box with finger foods works best. Include a cold pack with lunches that need to be chilled. We are unable to heat up or refrigerate lunches. Keep lunches simple – no soups, please. Milk for lunch and snack will be provided. If your toddler needs a cup with a special lid, please send labeled with his/her name. To ensure safety, all food and beverages brought from home are to be labeled with the child's name and the date. Lunches must be packed in plastic, divided and covered dishes.

Parents of infants (9-18 months) may bring in **PLASTIC** bottles and baby food in jars. The child's name must be written on all baby bottles, jars, etc. If your child has experienced changes in diet or feeding schedule, please notify the caregiver. It is **IMPERATIVE** that you inform us of any **food allergies** your child might have, such as peanut butter, milk, eggs, etc. A doctor's statement is necessary to indicate a continuing allergy. Temple Israel follows Biblical Kashrut, so do not send in food containing pork or shellfish.

### **FOOD ALLERGY POLICY**

Barbara K. Lipman Early Center recognizes that food allergies can cause serious life threatening conditions for some children. To keep all our children safe, the Early Learning Center will strive to limit those foods that have been determined to cause allergic reactions in children, acknowledging that we cannot guarantee a nut free environment. Peanuts and tree nuts can be an especially difficult food to limit; however, we will strive to be a nut sensitive environment in both Noah's Ark and the preschool area.

Since many other activities and programs occur on the Temple Israel campus, we cannot guarantee a nut free environment outside of the perimeters of the preschool. We will strive to be nut free in the classrooms and at all programs, or special events during normal school hours. We ask that individual students, families, faculty and staff NOT bring peanut butter, nuts and nut products for lunch and snacks. Foods served at school related receptions, TIPPS fundraisers, and classroom birthday celebrations must be nut free.

Each student with a diagnosed food allergy will have a physician's authorization for medication to be immediately administered to help counteract any possible reactions to food allergies, but these medications can only do so much. Your help and participation is vital to make this policy work.

The following procedures were developed from the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network's *School Guidelines for Managing Students with Food Allergies 2006*.

## FOOD ALLERGY PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

### THE FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Notify the school of the child's allergies on the health form at the beginning of each year or if the allergy is diagnosed during the academic year, notify the school in writing as soon as possible.
2. Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by a physician.
3. Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
4. Where age appropriate, educate the child in the self-management of the food allergy including:
  - safe and unsafe foods
  - symptoms of allergic reactions
5. Review policies/procedures with the school staff and the child's physician after a reaction has occurred.
6. Provide current emergency contact information, and update all contact information throughout the school year if there are changes in phone numbers or address.

### RESPONSIBILITIES of the Early Learning Center:

1. The administrative staff and classroom teacher will review health records submitted by parents and physicians.
2. The school will ask families, faculty and staff to provide only non-nut food options when bringing special treats or food for receptions, birthdays, or special events.
3. The administrative staff will review all packaged foods purchased for snacks to ensure they are tree nut and peanut free.
4. A child's medications will include an emergency kit that contains a physician's standing order for epinephrine. Medications will be kept in an easily accessible secure location in the child's classroom, with additional epinephrine in a locked cabinet in the administrator's office.
5. Following an allergic reaction, the administrator and classroom staff will review the incident with parents and implement additional plans, if necessary.
6. Faculty and staff will oversee snack and lunch time procedures so children will not trade or share food with others.

## Nutrition

### USDA Dietary Guidelines

The **Dietary Guidelines for Americans** gives science-based advice on food and physical activity choices for health. The Dietary Guidelines describe a **healthy diet** as one that

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

### Guidelines for a Healthy Diet for Children

#### Birth to 2 Years Old

- Breast milk is the best single food for infants from birth to 6 months of age. It provides good nutrition and protects against infection. Breast-feeding should be continued for at least the first year, if possible. If breast-feeding is not possible or not desired, iron-enriched formula (not cow's milk) should be used during the first 12 months of life. Whole cow's milk can be used to replace formula or breast milk after 12 months of age.
- Begin suitable solid foods at 4 to 6 months of age. Most experts recommend iron-enriched infant rice cereal as the first food.
- Start new foods one at a time to make it easier to identify problem foods. For example, wait 1 week before adding each new cereal, vegetable, or other food.
- Use iron-rich foods, such as grains, iron-enriched cereals, and meats.
- Do not give honey or corn syrup to infants during their first year.

- Do not limit fat during the first 2 years of life.

### **Two Years and Older**

- Provide a variety of foods, including plenty of fruit, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Use salt (sodium) and sugars in moderation.
- Encourage a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
- Help your child maintain a healthy weight by providing proper foods and encouraging regular exercise.

### **Physical Activity**

Your child needs regular physical activity through play and sports to stay fit. Good physical activity habits learned early can help your child become an active and healthy adult. Adults who are physically active are less likely to be overweight or to have heart disease, high blood pressure, and other diseases. Adults and children should try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

- Encourage your child to participate in physical activities, including sports.
- Encourage involvement in activities that can be enjoyed into adulthood (for example, walking, running, swimming, basketball, tennis, golf, dancing, and bicycle riding).
- Plan physical activities with family or friends; exercise is more fun with others.
- Limit the time your child spends watching TV to less than 2 hours per day. Encourage going to the playground, park, gym, or swimming pool instead.

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid> and [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care)

### **Wellness Procedures**

In a preschool community, good health is an important issue. At this age, children are just beginning to develop immunities. To reduce exposure to colds, flu, conjunctivitis or other contagious diseases, we ask that you weigh all factors when determining if your child should attend. Children should remain at home during the initial and most contagious days of a cold. This concern is for his/her comfort and for the protection of the other children in the program. Children may return after 24 hours, fever free.

The Early Learning Center follows the exclusion procedures listed in the American Academy of Pediatrician's *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools*. Inclusion/Exclusion criteria may be found on p 27 – 29 and the handbook is available in the office of the director. Specifically, temporary exclusion is recommended when the child's illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff of the school and/or the illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the ability to care for other children.

Please be considerate of all concerned – **SICK CHILDREN MUST BE KEPT AT HOME**. Children may not attend with: fever, diarrhea, a frequent or severe cough or cold, persistent runny nose, skin infection, conjunctivitis, or rash.

If any of these symptoms are visible, your child will be refused admittance for the day; or, if any symptoms become evident during the day, you will be notified immediately. For the comfort and well-being of your child, you will be requested to pick him / her up as soon as possible, within 30 minutes. If we are unable to reach you, we will call your emergency contacts.

When children are unusually fatigued or show signs of illness, they should be kept at home. In general, if children are not able to play outside, they are not well enough to come to school. **We do not have any provision for a child to remain indoors at outdoor playtime.**

## **Medication**

The administration of medication by our staff is discouraged. Parents are urged to adjust dosages so medication will not need to be administered during the program day. When absolutely necessary, all oral medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must be accompanied by a completed medication form and a fax from the physician. Medication may be given from its **ORIGINAL CONTAINER** and must be clearly marked with child's name, name of medication, dosage and the time that the medication is to be administered. Medication permission forms for application of topical medicines are available and **MUST** be completed and signed by a parent before administration each day. Children returning to school after illness must have been determined to be non-contagious by the family doctor.

## **Child Abuse Policy**

Teachers and caregivers are in a unique position to identify and help abused and neglected children. In Tennessee, if a teacher or caregiver has "reasonable cause to believe" a child is being abused or neglected, the suspicion must be reported to the State Department of Children's Services or law enforcement – and we are required by law to do so immediately. Failure to report is a misdemeanor which carries a fine, or imprisonment, or both. ALL persons must report suspected cases of child abuse – this includes doctors, teachers, parents, family members and friends.

Mandated reporters are protected by the state in terms of liability and confidentiality. Reporters who "act in good faith" are immune from any civil or criminal charges which may result.

*Memphis Child Advocacy Center 525-2377*

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-877-237-0004

## **Medical Safety**

Children's files are located in the school office and contain emergency medical information and emergency names and phone numbers. In case of serious illness or accident, if the parent cannot be reached, the emergency number indicated on the application form will be called to care for the child. If neither of these adults can be reached, the doctor noted in the Emergency Medical Release form will be contacted. If the doctor cannot be reached or immediate intervention is necessary, Emergency Medical Services will be contacted.

## **Pets and Animals**

Classrooms pets and animals are disallowed due to issues of safety and the likelihood of allergic reactions. Highly trained service animals may visit and each child must have a signed release form for such visits. Wildlife on Wheels, an educational program from the Memphis Zoo may visit, as well. Snakes and reptiles are never allowed due to the transmission of salmonella.

## **BUSINESS OFFICE**

### **Withdrawal and Relocation**

Parents understand that attendance at Temple Israel or participation in its activities are privileges which may be temporarily or partially suspended, totally withdrawn, or terminated by agreement of the Director, Executive Director and teacher at their sole discretion:

1. for disciplinary reasons;
2. for failure of student and/or his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to abide by the policies, rules, and/or regulations of Temple Israel as may be set out in the ELC Handbook, including those in effect at the distribution of the Application Contract or as subsequently amended or supplemented thereafter;
3. for parent's failure to pay, when due, any amounts in the Statement and Enrollment Agreement;
4. for such reasons as may, in the judgment of the Director, Executive Director, and teacher constitute a danger to or interference with the health, orderly learning environment, or safety of the student, other students, or the faculty;
5. for failure to fulfill obligations of membership at Temple Israel (if applicable).

Voluntary withdrawal will result in the loss of current and prepaid tuition and fees. If a family relocates from the Memphis area, no refund of tuition or fees is permitted for the current semester. However, with written notice to the Executive Director, at least one month prior to the beginning of the second semester, fees for that semester may be waived.

### **Transfer Policy**

Students wishing to transfer to another school may have all records forwarded pending completion of fee payments. Parents wishing to transfer a child to the Early Learning Center are required to schedule a pre-enrollment visit with the Director. Parents wishing to enroll a child in Kindergarten must make an appointment for an evaluation and screening assessment.

### **Program Additions or Deletions**

During the year, if parents wish to increase or decrease the number of days a child attends, one change per year is permitted with no fee charged. Additional changes require a processing fee of \$25. If additional hours or days of ELC programming are added after a semester has begun, the additional fees are due at the time of the change. The Temple Israel Accounting Department will bill you accordingly.

### **Confidentiality**

Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center will maintain the confidentiality of all student records as required or permitted by law. Any information collected is used for the benefit of the child's educational development. This information may include assessment data, grades, medical history, and anecdotal records. No one has immediate access to student files except authorized Early Learning Center staff. Files are kept in the administrative office and are locked in a file cabinet. Authorized family members have the right to review a child's file upon request.

A child's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena. Barbara K. Lipman Early Learning Center will not release any portion of a child's file without the unanimous written consent from the child's parents and/or all adults who are legally responsible for the child, or unless required by law.

*REVISED June 2009*