

Dear Families,

Welcome to Temple Bat Yahm Preschool Early Childhood Education Program! We are so pleased that you have chosen to entrust your child(ren) to us during this wonderful and impressionable time.

As early childhood professionals, our staff is dedicated to providing care that is supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to your child's individual needs. We strive to provide a program for our children and families that is developmentally appropriate for each child. This initial journey of learning nurtures social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual growth which set the tone for future academic learning.

Because families are an integral part of our program, we look forward to working as a team to ensure that your child grows in all areas of development. Please feel free to offer your assistance, as well as your many abilities. As a community of learners, we encourage your partnership with us.

We have prepared this handbook to help facilitate the relationship between our staff and our families by providing specific information about our early childhood education program. We hope you will find this handbook informative and helpful in making you feel more familiar with our program and more comfortable in our school.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask. We are looking forward to a successful and fun-filled school year!

L' Shalom,

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Laura Gramling, MA.  
*Director of Early Childhood Education*

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## ***Temple Bat Yahm Mission Statement***

Temple Bat Yahm is a Reform congregation and caring community where families and individuals:

- \*enrich our lives through spiritual worship
- \*share lifecycle events
- \*educate ourselves and our children
- \*and sustain the House of Israel

We combine the comforts and responsibilities of Jewish tradition with the lifelong study of Torah in the context of modern day living.

## ***Early Childhood Education Program***

### **PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT**

At Temple Bat Yahm, we believe that children are individual learners; each one gaining skills at their own pace and responding to different styles and methods of teaching. We strive to create a rich curriculum that meets the needs of all children: visual, auditory, and perceptual learners. Our philosophy centers itself on the whole child. We aim to nurture and strengthen each child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical abilities through our program. We believe that children learn through active play and exploration in a multi-sensory environment.

### **GOALS**

Temple Bat Yahm's Early Childhood Education Program strives to provide a variety of services to children and their families that reflect the Temple's Mission Statement and the school's philosophy. These services include:

1. To provide a safe and enriching environment for children from 3 months through six years old.
2. To foster a positive self-image through a warm, play-centered environment that is healthy, safe, and secure.
3. To offer creative play and constructive, developmentally appropriate instruction as part of the daily routine.
4. To provide every opportunity for growth and learning for each child. Children learn through interaction with other children and adults. They also learn through individual exploration, a variety of activities and materials, and consistent nurturing and guidance.
5. To encourage the development of a strong, positive Jewish identity and an appreciation for Judaism.
6. To develop a reinforcing relationship between teachers and children where teachers strive to understand and accept each child's feelings and thoughts.
7. To develop a positive partnership between families and teachers.
8. To help families understand the methods and goals of our school experience and work together to enhance the development of their children
9. To establish and maintain community relations that support the growth of our children, their families, the program, and the community.

## **LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION**

Temple Bat Yahm's Early Childhood Education Program is licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing. Staff members are required to follow all CCL procedures. Additionally, having demonstrated substantial compliance with nationally-recognized criteria for high-quality early childhood education programs, our program has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) since 1990, and most recently becoming re-accredited in 2010.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the individual child through developmentally appropriate practices. The classroom day is comprised of opportunities for small group interaction, large group time, and individual play. We base our philosophy that children learn best through play and exploration from "research-based evidence that active play leads to optimal outcomes for young children in the following areas: physical, mental health, cognitive development, language and early literacy development, and social competence" (*"Making the Case for Play Policy", Young Children, Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, March 2005, p.84*).

The framework of our curriculum is based on the research and theories of Piaget, Erikson and Vygotsky. The classroom design incorporates a variety of centers offering the children the opportunity to discover and learn. For example, children may scoop and measure rice at a sensory table, draw pictures and write letters at a writing center, and pretend to be at a restaurant at a dramatic play area. Developmental goals are observed and measured on a continuum level of achievement.

The ideas for the large classroom units emerge from the children's play and through their interests based on emergent curriculum. By studying large thematic units, the children will investigate and explore topics through movement, science, literature, math, art, music, and cooking activities.

We also strive to foster the values and customs of Judaism throughout our curriculum, and we use Maxine Handelman's Jewish Every Day as a basis for our Judaic content. Jewish holidays are taught through symbols, foods, music, art, stories, puzzles, and drama. Each week we celebrate Shabbat with a member of our clergy, and we invite families to join us as special guests throughout the year. Jewish values are modeled and discussed such as performing mitzvot (doing good deeds) and giving tzedakah (charity). Blessings are recited before we eat, Hebrew words are introduced, and the children learn about Israel throughout the year.

## **ASSESSMENT**

See Appendix A for a complete description of our Assessment Plan.

### **Developmental Goals**

#### ***2 Year Old Program***

##### **Goal 1: To Learn about Self and Others**

- Objective 1: Trusts known, caring adults
- Objective 2: Regulates own behavior
- Objective 3: Manages own feelings
- Objective 4: Responds to others' feelings with growing empathy
- Objective 5: Plays with other children
- Objective 6: Learns to be a member of a group
- Objective 7: Uses personal care skills

##### **Goal 2: To Learn about Moving**

- Objective 8: Demonstrates basic gross motor skills
- Objective 9: Demonstrates basic fine motor skills

##### **Goal 3: To Learn about the World**

- Objective 10: Sustains attention
- Objective 11: Understands how objects can be used
- Objective 12: Shows a beginning understanding of cause and effect
- Objective 13: Shows a beginning understanding that things can be grouped
- Objective 14: Uses problem-solving strategies
- Objective 15: Engages in pretend play

##### **Goal 4: To Learn about Communicating**

- Objective 16: Develops receptive language
- Objective 17: Develops expressive language
- Objective 18: Participates in conversations
- Objective 19: Enjoys books and being read to
- Objective 20: Shows an awareness of pictures and print
- Objective 21: Experiments with drawing and writing

### **3 Year Old Program, Pre-K Program, & Transitional Kindergarten Program**

*Note: The 3 year old and Pre-K curricula are based on 50 objectives. For each objective, there is a continuum along which children are expected to develop. The Transitional Kindergarten will bridge the gap between the California Preschool Learning Foundations and the California Core Curriculum for kindergarten. Standards are aligned with those of the Newport Mesa Unified School District and the Irvine Unified School District .*

#### **Social/Emotional Development**

##### *Sense of Self*

- Objective 1: Shows ability to adjust to new situations
- Objective 2: Demonstrates appropriate trust in adults
- Objective 3: Recognizes own feelings and manages them appropriately
- Objective 4: Stands up for rights

##### *Responsibility for Self and Others*

- Objective 5: Demonstrates self-direction and independence
- Objective 6: Takes responsibility for own well-being
- Objective 7: Respects and cares for classroom environment and materials
- Objective 8: Follows classroom routines
- Objective 9: Follows classroom rules

##### *Prosocial Behavior*

- Objective 10: Plays well with other children
- Objective 11: Recognizes the feelings of others and responds appropriately
- Objective 12: Shares and respects the rights of others
- Objective 13: Uses thinking skills to resolve conflicts.

#### **Physical Development**

##### *Gross Motor*

- Objective 14: Demonstrates basic locomotor skills (running, jumping, hopping, galloping)
- Objective 15: Shows balance while moving
- Objective 16: Climbs up and down
- Objective 17: Pedals and steers a tricycle (or other wheeled vehicle)
- Objective 18: Demonstrates throwing, kicking, and catching skills

##### *Fine Motor*

- Objective 19: Controls small muscles in hands
- Objective 20: Coordinates eye-hand movement
- Objective 21: Uses tools for writing and drawing

## **Cognitive Development**

### *Learning and Problem Solving*

- Objective 22: Observes objects and events with curiosity
- Objective 23: Approaches problems flexibly
- Objective 24: Shows persistence in approaching tasks
- Objective 25: Explores cause and effect
- Objective 26: Applies knowledge or experience to a new context

### *Logical Thinking*

- Objective 27: Classifies objects
- Objective 28: Compares/measures
- Objective 29: Arranges objects in a series
- Objective 30: Recognizes patterns and can repeat them
- Objective 31: Shows awareness of time concepts and sequence
- Objective 32: Shows awareness of position in space
- Objective 33: Uses one-to-one correspondence
- Objective 34: Uses numbers and counting

### *Representation and Symbolic Thinking*

- Objective 35: Takes on pretend roles and situations
- Objective 36: Makes believe with objects
- Objective 37: Makes and interprets representations

## **Language Development**

### *Listening and Speaking*

- Objective 38: Hears and discriminates the sounds of language
- Objective 39: Expresses self using words and expanded sentences
- Objective 40: Understands and follows oral directions
- Objective 41: Answers questions
- Objective 42: Asks questions
- Objective 43: Actively participates in conversations

### *Reading and Writing*

- Objective 44: Enjoys and values reading
- Objective 45: Demonstrates understanding of print concepts
- Objective 46: Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
- Objective 47: Uses emerging reading skills to make meaning from print
- Objective 48: Comprehends and interprets meaning from books and other texts
- Objective 49: Understands the purpose of writing
- Objective 50: Writes letters and words

## **ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment is open to any child providing the school can meet the needs of that child as a group member. Enrollment is open to all children without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, political beliefs, religion or the status, behavior, religion, or beliefs of their parents. Every effort is made for children with disabilities to participate in the same routines and play experiences as children without disabilities. If needed, accommodation will be made whenever possible. The school does not have a non-ambulatory license at this time.

## **REGISTRATION PROCEDURE**

Materials will be available to anyone interested in registering for the following fall term during January. In order to register for the following school year, currently enrolled families must be up to date with their tuition payments. Registration will take place on a priority basis, which will be detailed in the registration packet. Class placement is a detailed process that considers many important factors. Our goal is to provide the best atmosphere for each child so that he or she can learn, explore, and grow to his or her best potential in the most positive, well-suited atmosphere. We attempt to balance each class according to each child's learning style, personality, gender, friendships, and the teacher's teaching style. Ultimately, placement is determined at the Director's discretion.

## **TUITION/PAYMENT POLICY**

### ***Tuition and Payment***

Annual tuition is based upon the September through June school year. The total tuition amount is divided into 10 payments, one of which is required as a deposit as of June 1. The remaining nine payments will be billed from September through May. Members of Temple Bat Yahm receive a tuition discount, as do children whose grandparents are members. Members paying promotional dues rates are not eligible for tuition discounts other than sibling discount. Families with more than one child enrolled in our school in the same year will receive a 10% discount on the lesser tuition. Families with more than two children enrolled will receive a 10% discount on all but the highest tuition.

### ***Cancellation Policy***

ALL notification must be made in writing. An administrative fee of \$100 will be retained if the school is notified on or before July 1<sup>st</sup>. Between July 2<sup>nd</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup> half of the deposit will be retained. After August 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be NO REFUNDS. If a child leaves the program mid-year, the initial payment is used to cover the final month's tuition. One month's notice, in writing, is required when leaving the program mid-year.

## ***CampYahm Yahm Program***

Registration for camp begins in March. Camp tuition is due July 1<sup>st</sup>. Cancellation Policy for camp: The registration fee is non-refundable. All notification must be made in writing prior to the start of camp.

## ***Scholarships***

Scholarships for temple members are available through the Sue Schoen Memorial Scholarship Fund. This fund is designed to help offset the cost of our program to help people in need of assistance. Information can be obtained from the Director and will be kept confidential.

## ***Calendar and Program Information***

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Classes offered are as follows:

- ◆ **Two Day 2 Year Olds:** Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00am-12:45am
- ◆ **Three Day 2 Year Olds:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00am-12:45am
- ◆ **Three Day 3 Year Olds:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00am-12:45am
- ◆ **Three Day 4 Year Olds:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00am-12:45pm
- ◆ **Five Day 3-4 Year Olds:** Monday through Friday, 9:00-12:45
- ◆ **Pre-K:** Monday through Friday, 9-12:45
- ◆ **T-K:** Monday through Friday 8:45-1:45
- ◆ **Early Care:** Monday-Friday, 8:00-9:00
- ◆ **Enrichment:** Monday through Friday, 1:00-1:45
- ◆ **Plus Day:** Monday through Friday 1:00-3:00

### **PLUS DAY and ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS**

For children in our two, three and five day programs, we offer an extended stay option called Plus Day which runs from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm every day. Children engage in gross motor play, rest, have a snack, and do a special activity of the day. Parents sign up for this program at the beginning of the year and pay on a monthly basis.

Enrichment programs include Drama, Fitness, Art, Cooking, Music, Alphabet Soup, Science, Math and Busy Bees. They are available for children from 3-6 years of age who are fully potty trained. Some classes have minimum age requirement because of content (Art, Science & Math). Class sign-up is by the quarter: fall, winter & spring and is on a first come first served basis.

## ***Daily Procedures***

### **ABSENCES**

If your child will not be attending school, please call our office to let us know. We do not reimburse or offer make-up days for absences.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Each child must be dropped off and picked up at their classrooms. Upon arrival, each child must wash their hands upon entering the classroom. As per state regulations, please be sure to **SIGN CHILDREN IN AND OUT EACH DAY**. State law requires that **ALL CHILDREN** be signed in and out every day by the parent or guardian that drops off and picks up the child so that each child will be legally accounted for at all times. This security measure is very important and takes very little time each day. You are required to use a **FULL, LEGIBLE LEGAL SIGNATURE**.

If you arrive early, you may supervise your child in the Multi-purpose Room until classes officially begin, as teachers utilize the time before class to make preparations for the day. We ask that you are prompt in dropping off and picking up your child each day. Not only is a late drop off disruptive to the class, but we have found that it is difficult for the child to adjust to the daily activities.

Please also be prompt at dismissal time. Young children get very anxious if you are late picking them up, and many of our teachers have other commitments after class. Your child will be brought to the ECE office and supervised by one of our staff members to wait for you. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be charged a \$5.00 fee per child, which will continue to accumulate every 5 minutes. In any event, if you are going to be late, please call the office.

Carpool forms are kept on the Sign In/Sign Out boards in each classroom. For your child's protection please return these forms and keep them up to date. You must notify the school **IN WRITING** if someone else besides the child's parents/guardians and the people designated on your approved Pick-Up List (including playdates and other situations) will be picking up your child. If there is a last minute emergency, please call the office in order to ensure the safety of your child. Please limit phone arrangements to emergency situations.

In situations where the child's parents are divorced, the school must be informed (in confidence) as to the custody arrangements that have been made and whether the non-custodial parent (if any) is permitted to take the child from the school. A copy of the court order stating these conditions must be on file at the school in order for us to act in the proper legal manner. We must also be notified when court orders or custody arrangements change.

## **CLOTHING**

Send your child to school in comfortable play clothes every day. Children are bound to get messy when they are engaged in developmentally appropriate play. In order to foster a sense of independence during bathroom time we ask that you dress your child in shorts, dresses/skirts, or pants that are easy to pull up and down. Overalls and belts are fashionable but are very difficult for young children to manipulate by themselves. Shirts and jackets with strings around the collar and hood are a potential choking hazard.

Sneakers or rubber sole shoes are a must for climbing on the playground apparatus. Open toe sandals, clogs, and backless shoes contribute to accidents. We have also found that *Crocs* are not safe for children when climbing on the outdoor play structure.

We play outdoors whenever possible, except in inclement weather. Therefore, please dress your child accordingly.

Also, please send in a seasonal set of extra clothes for your child to be kept in school, and be sure to replace them if they are used and as the season changes. **PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING!!!** This includes socks, and underwear.

## **LUNCH**

Your child's class includes a lunch time. When you pack a lunch from home for your child, please make sure that it is clearly labeled and also be sure to include an ice pack. We are an "Allergy Friendly" school and do not permit peanuts, tree nuts or food processed on machinery contaminated by nuts to be served for lunches or snacks.

## **KOSHER POLICY**

Our facility follows a "kosher-style" philosophy during all meal times. Snacks or lunches should never contain food from both the meat and dairy categories. Also, shellfish or pork products are prohibited.

## **SHABBAT**

### ***Shabbat Celebration at School***

A joyous Shabbat celebration occurs every Friday morning at 12:20. A member of our clergy leads the children in Shabbat blessings, as well as in song and dance. The children also learn about an upcoming holiday or tradition or about an interesting facet of Judaism or its traditions. Each class takes turns leading the blessings. You will be advised via e-mail when your child's class will be the Shabbat helpers. Parents are always welcome at Shabbat. Please arrive by 12:15. You may sit in the adult chairs which are provided or join your child's class as they sit on the carpet.

### ***Tot Shabbat***

Approximately once a month (see the School Calendar), we host a very special Tot Shabbat on Saturday morning which is geared toward families with children age six and under. The service is open to the entire community and is led by a member of our clergy or a staff member. The service begins at 9:30am. After the service, the children and families will enjoy a snack and juice.

### **TOYS FROM HOME**

We request that your child leave his/her toys and special treasures at home, except for special show and tell or sharing days. Personal toys often get lost or broken, causing the child to become very upset. Also, keeping track of these items is a difficult responsibility for the staff.

### **TZEDAKAH**

According to Jewish tradition, it is a mitzvah (“commandment”, but typically referring to acts of kindness or good deeds) to contribute to tzedakah (“charity”). Sharing with others who are less fortunate is a valuable learning experience for children. All of the classrooms have tzedakah boxes. In previous years, the coins that the children brought to class on Fridays were donated to various local, national, and international causes.

In addition to the contribution of money, the families in our school are often given the opportunity to give of their time and efforts to help others less fortunate. For instance, in previous years, families have been asked to donate food, games, books, and craft supplies to homeless shelters. We are always looking for appropriate projects, so please feel free to bring new ideas to the Director or the Early Childhood Education Program.

### ***Special Events***

#### **BIRTHDAYS**

We welcome birthday celebrations at school. However, we ask that the celebration be kept modest. Please discuss your child’s birthday with his/her teacher before the day arrives, and we will make arrangements to celebrate during snack time. The children will bake cupcakes as a class cooking project. Please refrain from sending in “goody bags” or prizes.

In order to alleviate hurt feelings, if you are having a birthday party outside of school, please **DO NOT** distribute the invitations in school, unless you are inviting **ALL** of the children in the class. Otherwise, please use the addresses found on the class list to mail invitations. In honor of your child’s birthday, you may wish to donate a special book or toy to his/her class. Please speak to the teacher to determine what is most beneficial to the class.

## **HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We consider holidays ~ both American and Judaic ~ as special occasions to celebrate. Class celebrations and special events are held for many of the Jewish holidays, as well as some American holidays. The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), of which our synagogue is a member, does not recognize Halloween or Valentine's Day, even though they are considered American traditions. Thus, we do not celebrate these traditions. Please do not send your child to school in Halloween attire, and please do not distribute Valentine's Day cards in school.

We invite families to celebrate with us during school time for the holidays of Chanukah and Purim. We honor our fathers and grandfathers at "PJs and Pops" and our mothers and grandmothers at "MAGGIE Day". Please look on the school calendar for the dates of these celebrations.

## **SPECIAL GUESTS**

Several times during the year, we invite special guests from the community to share their talents or information with the children. These guests may include musical performers, traveling animal exhibits, or community helpers. These special guest visits are not only enriching, entertaining, and informative for the children, but they enable us to expose the children to some of our community resources.

## ***General Program Information***

### **CLERGY SUPPORT**

Rabbi Gersh Zylberman, our senior rabbi, is the member of the clergy that supervises the Early Childhood Education Program. He is assisted by Rabbi Rayna Gevurtz and Cantor Jonathan Grant. In addition to the Early Childhood Education Director, Rabbi Zylberman is also available at any time to speak with you regarding any questions or concerns that you may have.

### **CONFERENCES/FAMILY COMMUNICATION**

#### ***Family/Teacher Communication***

Communication between you and your child's teacher is crucial to the success of our program. To this end, our teachers and administration use a variety of opportunities to communicate with families. Before school begins, we ask families to provide information regarding their family structure, their child's habits and preferences, and, if families wish to share, information about their family's socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. We also ask about children's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. Additionally, please feel free to discuss any of these issues with your child's teacher or the Director. This information enables our staff to become acquainted with and learn from the families and children in our program, helping us with classroom planning. It is the hope of our staff that families will feel

comfortable talking to us during the course of the year and will take many opportunities to help us get to know their children and their goals for them. In turn, our teachers will share any information and will answer any questions you may have.

You are always welcome to talk to teachers briefly either before or after class. If more time is needed and your child's teacher is unavailable following pick up, please ask the teacher to schedule a meeting time with you. You may feel free to ask the teacher to give you a call at home, or you may leave a message in the office for the teacher to call you at a mutually convenient time.

It is also important that staff and parents communicate with each other on an ongoing basis. Please let us know about any changes in the child's home (such as a new baby or a parent's unexpected business trip) or other issues that may affect your child in class. Lead Teachers will communicate with parents on an as-needed basis, regardless of conference scheduling.

We encourage you to raise concerns with the Lead Teacher or with the Director. We will work collaboratively to find mutually satisfying solutions. If you are having difficulty communicating with your child's teacher or are having trouble finding a mutually satisfying solution with the teacher, please speak to the Director. The Director will work with you and with the teacher to find a solution that will be satisfactory to you and will work for the teacher and the class. If after talking to the Director, the family is not satisfied with the result, the Trustee for Early Childhood Education is available to further discuss and address the family's concerns.

### ***Class Newsletters***

Each week, teachers will email a newsletter to all of the families in the class. This newsletter will provide information about any themes that the class is working on, a sneak peek at the upcoming week, highlights of the previous week, and reminders of any special classroom events. The teacher may also take the opportunity to give you ideas about how to reinforce or expand at home something the children have been working on in school.

### ***Director Communication***

The Director or the Administrative Assistant will regularly send an email to all families with reminders for school events and committee meetings, as well as any important Temple happenings. The Director will highlight upcoming community events in which families might be interested, as well as early childhood and Judaic resources from which families can benefit. Additionally, the Director will always be available for questions or concerns that may arise during the school year.

### ***Parent/Teacher Conferences***

Formal parent/teacher conferences are offered twice during the school year. This is an opportunity to review your child's growth and development, to share any noteworthy

behaviors that are occurring at home or in school, and to discuss any concerns that may exist.

Our staff will use various recording tools to monitor your child's natural development. The information gathered using the following tools will be shared with you during conference meetings or other appropriate times:

- ◆ Anecdotal Records: logging your child's behavior, interests and any information given to us by parents regarding changes in the child's home life or environment.
- ◆ Student Progress Reports: using the developmental goals that are part of our curriculum to assess how your child is progressing in each of those areas.

At any time, if you have concerns or if you have witnessed your child reaching a milestone or developmental goal, please communicate this with the teacher.

Following each of the two conferences, you will receive a copy of your child's progress report, which will include the formal assessment as well as the teacher's open-ended comments.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may request a conference with your child's teacher at any time during the school year. You may also request a conference with the Director at any time.

### ***Our Effort to Use Less Paper***

In an effort to save paper and be more environmentally conscious, we try to distribute many of our written communications (e.g., flyers, newsletters, calendars) via email. Please be sure that our office has your current email address. We will, of course, provide paper copies for families without internet access, but we hope that the majority of our families will accept communications electronically.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

At Temple Bat Yahm's Early Childhood Education Program, we strive to protect everyone's right of privacy. Child records are kept in a secure cabinet in the office, with the Director, Administrative Assistant, and the child's teachers having access on a "need to know" basis.

Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other families and/or children will not be shared with families. Staff members are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. Within our program, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with staff members who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: special needs and disability information, disciplinary information, and health-related information of anyone associated with our program. For instance, if a child harms another child, the identity of the involved children will be kept confidential during discussions with the families of the children.

Outside of our program, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared with relevant professionals when the parent/guardian of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

Parents/guardians will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of our program, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Children of all ages need to explore their environment and test their curiosities. Exploration is imperative to the learning process and is encouraged within our program in a safe environment under the guidance of our teachers. As a child explores, s/he experiences many trials and errors before a concept is understood or learned. Our school's discipline policy flows from this understanding. Just as children are not expected to learn a color the first time it is experienced, they too are not expected to learn appropriate behavior without constant modeling, positive reinforcement, and practice. Our goal is to work cooperatively with children and families to help children develop self-control. We hope to help children of all ages become increasingly independent. We want children to feel good about themselves and to learn about their needs along with those of other people. We want children to learn to control themselves, to see the possible consequences of their actions, and accept alternate behaviors. We believe that consistency in all areas of a young child's day is important at home and at school. You are welcome to discuss disciplinary issues with your child's teacher or the Director at any time.

We use a combination of the following steps to insure positive discipline:

1. We change the environment to eliminate potential difficulties.
2. We redirect the child to another activity before the behavior becomes an interruption - positive and constructive direction.
3. We refer to do's instead of don'ts.
4. We recognize that occasional inappropriate behavior is best ignored.
5. We encourage the child to think of alternative solutions and the possible effects of choosing those alternatives when challenging situations arise.
6. We try to determine why a particular situation has occurred and what can be done to avoid it next time.
7. We use time away from the group to help an individual child calm down.
8. We recognize and acknowledge positive behavior.
9. We involve the child in the decision-making process when possible.
10. We contact the parent/guardian about the child's behavior to gain insight as well as to work together to resolve the issue. If a child harms another child, the identity of the involved children will be kept confidential during discussions with the families of the children.

11. If a serious situation occurs, the child may be asked to leave school for the remainder of the day.
12. Under no circumstances shall discipline of a child at our program involve: hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, unsupervised isolation, withholding of emotional responses or stimulation, enforced silence for long periods, association of a negative behavior with rest, toileting or food, or any form of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

We strive to keep an open communication with the parent(s) or guardian(s) concerning all facets of their child's development. If there is an ongoing problem with a child, the Teacher and/or Director will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the problem. Together, we will establish an action plan to help alleviate the negative behavior. If there are repeated serious episodes of inappropriate behavior, the family may have the option to pay for a responsible party to "shadow" the child during his/her attendance. The Temple may be able to subsidize the cost of the shadow. This person must be mutually acceptable to the family and the Director. Alternatively, a child may be asked to leave our program if it is determined that we are unable to provide an appropriate environment for the child or other children in the class are in danger of being harmed. Our program may also bring in a consulting psychologist or other professional(s) to observe a child or children in their class and make appropriate recommendations to our staff regarding classroom management techniques and acceptable age-appropriate behavior. If appropriate, we will work with the family and relevant professionals to develop an individualized plan to address the behavior. This information is confidential between the professional and our staff.

If a parent/caregiver is on our premises and acts in a threatening manner to a staff member, parent, or a child, that person (and perhaps their child, depending on the circumstance) will be removed from our program immediately and unable to return.

### **FAMILY VISITATION/OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Our school maintains an open door policy. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit and observe our program at any time during our regular operating hours. Arrangements may be made with the Director, or Lead Teacher in order to be sure that the visitation will not disrupt class dynamics or the class schedule. Family members are also invited into the classroom at any time to share a special skill, talent or information that you may have. Please arrange a mutually convenient time with your child's teacher.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

We ask that all clothing, lunch boxes, blankets, etc. be labeled for easier identification. All items misplaced around school are put in the Lost and Found box located in the multi-purpose room. You are welcome to check this box at any time.

## **PARKING/ENTRY**

The reserved parking spaces are set aside for senior staff members, and handicapped spaces are provided for individuals with handicapped parking permits. These spaces are reserved at **ALL** times and should **NEVER** be used by families, even during drop-off or pick-up. Curbside parking is also prohibited and dangerous.

Please enter the building through the Hub, **not the front doors of the temple**. The front entry is for those individuals meeting with clergy or the executive director. The Director “Meets and Greets” each family every morning in the hub and conducts the required visual health screening. This is an important beginning for each child’s day in preschool.

## **PHOTOS**

Our teachers often take photos of the children during special events and when doing special projects for use in classroom activities and books as well as to share with families. Photos may also be used in local newspapers and on the temple’s web site. A photo release form is part of your child’s registration packet.

## **REFERRALS**

We believe that families should be the primary decision makers about services that their children need, and we encourage families to advocate for their children to obtain needed services. Should you need help finding a medical specialist or other professional, the Director will provide you with a list of various local professionals that she believes would be beneficial. Please ask the Director, and she would be happy to help you find an appropriate professional. We will provide any necessary support as families negotiate health, mental health, assessment, and educational services for their children.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS/FULL INCLUSION PRESCHOOL PROJECT**

We will do our best to accommodate children with special needs-physical, behavioral, cognitive, etc. Close communication with you is essential in order for us to provide quality care. If your child has already been evaluated, please provide us with the appropriate paperwork, and we will work with you to continue the already implemented IEP or other individualized plan. If we feel that your child should be further evaluated, we will speak with you.

We do not discriminate against children with special needs. If we are not able to meet the child’s needs, we will work with you to find more appropriate care.

Children with issues or challenges in the classroom are observed first by the Lead Teacher. The Director will also observe. We will document our observations and areas of concern. If necessary, we allow the parents to bring in a consulting psychologist or other professional(s) for developmental screening or diagnostic assessment. Our teachers and the Director will work with these professionals at the family’s request. It is our hope that we will work together to provide appropriate intervention skills to help the

child be successful in an early childhood educational setting and to enhance future academics. To this end, we will work with the family and relevant professionals to develop an individualized plan. We encourage families to be advocates for their children's needs. If the family would like us to be involved, we will help the family with next steps, including further assessment and professional help, by providing referrals, assistance along the way, and any necessary paperwork. A written "Permission to Release and Obtain Information" form must be in the child's file in order for us to discuss the child with other professionals.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICES**

Please inform your child's teacher and the Director if your child is currently receiving any supplementary services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech therapy. In this way, we can work collaboratively to support your child in reaching the desired goals. We will work with your child's therapist to the extent that your family desires. For example, the teachers will implement recommendations made by the therapist in the classroom setting. The teachers and the Director will also remain in close communication with the therapist as necessary. All communications between school and therapist require written consent of the family.

## **TRANSITIONING INTO SCHOOL**

The first week of school can be very difficult for both children and parents! Separation anxiety is a normal phase of development beginning with mobility at around six months and intensifying from 12 to 18 months. It is during this phase that children may experience intense emotions when separated from loved ones. Separation problems are often rooted in a fear of the unknown. Some helpful tips:

- \*Explain to your child that they are going to go to school in a positive and happy tone of voice.
- \*Ease your child into the school environment slowly.
- \*Bring a familiar object from home or pictures of family members.
- \*Be sure you say goodbye to your child.

Even for children who have been to our school before, returning to school after summer vacation can be intimidating. Children have a new teacher, there are new children in the class, and maybe that special friend is now gone. Before school begins, read a few books together with a starting school theme. Books can help your child get in touch with his/her feelings about going to a new place, making new friends, and separating from you. Reading together also gives your child an opportunity to talk about feelings or to ask questions about what to expect.

On the first day of school, be sure to arrive in plenty of time. When it is time to leave, don't slip out when your child is not looking. Children need to know when you are going and to be able to say goodbye. Say goodbye and give your child a point of reference for when you will return. A comment such as, "I will be back after lunch," is very helpful.

When you do leave the classroom, feel free to call the school to check on your child. We will check the classroom to see how everything is going and provide you with an honest report. We will let you know if you should return to school for an earlier pick up time.

## **TRANSITIONING INTO OTHER SCHOOLS OR PROGRAMS**

Our school strives to help families and children as they make the transition from our program into elementary schools or early childhood special needs programs. We help to prepare our Pre-K and T-K children to enter kindergarten by talking to them about what to expect. We also provide general information about local elementary schools' enrollment practices and visiting opportunities. For all children transitioning into other schools, we can provide information and support to assist families in communicating with other programs. With written consent of the family, our staff is also happy to complete any paperwork requested by other programs.

## ***Safety and Health Procedures***

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE**

Medication will be administered to your child only under the following circumstances:

- ◆ The child's health care provider has provided written authorization detailing the necessary steps to be taken.
- ◆ The parent/guardian has also provided written authorization.
- ◆ Medications are labeled with the child's first and last names, the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it

### **DIAPER POLICY**

Children's diapers are changed standing up or on a changing mat. The mat is then cleaned with a disinfectant. Staff members wear fresh gloves for each child, and diapers and gloves are discarded. We encourage families to dress their children in elastic waist pants and without belts. We understand that children potty train at different ages and rates. We will work with families to meet each child's individual need. We will encourage the use of the toilet, but children are not pressured. Please help your child become independent in this area.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Please be sure that all of your emergency contacts, business addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and approved pick-up list are kept up-to-date. Emergency contacts must be located within a half-hour radius of the school.

## **FIRST AID**

We do the very best that we can to keep our children as safe as possible; however, sometimes during play, accidents will occur. If a child receives a minor injury (bump, scraped knee), the Head Teacher will communicate this information with whomever is picking your child up that day, or you will receive an “Ouch Report” in your child’s mailbox or backpack. If appropriate, our staff will wash the area with soap and water and if needed, apply a band aid. If any serious injuries or illnesses occur, you will be notified immediately. If a child is injured due to an accident, an accident report must be filled out and signed by staff member and parent or legal guardian, and a copy will be kept on file.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

You must notify the Director, in writing, of any food allergies that your child may have, and we will make every effort to accommodate your child’s needs. Additionally, please be sure to speak to all teachers that work with your child so everyone is aware of the allergy. You will work together with the Lead Teacher to plan appropriate alternatives for special cooking projects or other activities involving food that occur as a part of the classroom curriculum. As these are an important and frequent part of the school day, we would like all children to be able to participate as fully as possible. It will be helpful to supply a special snack for him/her to eat at these times or during snack time.

It is the parent’s responsibility to supply the school with appropriate medication, labeled with your child’s name, and an Emergency Action Plan signed by the child’s physician to be used in the event of an allergic reaction. All allergy medications must be given directly to the Director. Do not leave them in your child’s lunch box or backpack. We require a written procedure approved by the child’s parents and pediatrician detailing the proper steps for our staff to take in the event of an allergic reaction. If the food allergy is very severe, the Director may, in her discretion, request that your child not stay for lunch.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

We are required to have an up-to-date health form, including immunizations, on file for each child. Each child must have had a health examination by a licensed physician within one year prior to admission. This shall preferably be received prior to the child starting school, but no later than 1 week after the child begins the program. We reserve the right to suspend the child from school until the form is handed in. At any time, if your child’s health status changes, it is your responsibility to notify the ECE office immediately.

According to state law, we will not permit any child who has had the following symptoms or illnesses **WITHIN THE PAST 24 HOURS** to attend school:

- a. severe pain or discomfort

- b. acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours, or bloody diarrhea
- c. two or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of 24 hours
- d. elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over or axillary temperature of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over in conjunction with behavior changes
- e. lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
- f. yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- g. red eyes with discharge
- h. infected, untreated skin patches
- i. difficult rapid breathing or severe coughing
- j. skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
- k. weeping or bleeding skin lesions that have not been treated by a health care provider
- l. mouth sores with drooling
- m. stiff neck

Additionally, a child must be **FEVER FREE (WITHOUT FEVER-REDUCING MEDICATIONS) FOR 24 HOURS** before returning to school. Once the child is symptom free or a licensed physician has given written indication that the child poses no serious threat, the child may return to school.

If a child becomes ill in school or exhibits any of these symptoms, the child will be brought to the Director's office, and the parent or emergency contact will be called immediately to pick up the child.

In the best interest of your child, staff, and the other children, we recommend that you refrain from sending your child to school if s/he exhibits symptoms of a cold, flu, stomach virus, or any other contagious infection.

The following is a list of communicable diseases that a child or staff member will not be allowed to return to school *without a note from their physician*:

<u>Respiratory Illnesses</u>	<u>Gastro-Intestinal Illnesses</u>	<u>Contact Illnesses</u>
Chicken Pox**	Campylobacter*	Impetigo
German Measles*	Escherichia coli*	Lice
Hemophilus Influenza*	Giardia Lamblia*	Scabies
Measles*	Hepatitis A*	Shingles
Meningococcus*	Salmonella*	
Mumps*	Shigella*	
Strep Throat		
Tuberculosis*		
Whooping Cough*		

\* Reportable diseases that will be reported to the health department by our program.

**\*\* Note:** If your child has chicken pox, a doctor's note is not required for re-admitting the child to school. A note from the parent or guardian is required, stating either that at least six days have elapsed since the onset of the rash or that all sores have dried and crusted.

If your child is exposed to any excludable disease at school, you will be notified in writing.

## **LICE POLICY**

Our program has a "no nit" policy, consistent with The National Pediculosis Association, This public health standard is intended to keep children lice free, nit free, and in school.

Families should be aware of signs that a child may be infested with lice or nits. Signs include scratching the head and/or the appearance of small, oval yellowish-colored eggs attached to the hair, many times located behind the ears or the nape of the neck. If lice is suspected or found, you must inform the office immediately and keep your child home from school.

If lice is suspected or found in any of the children at school, the family will be immediately contacted, and the child must be taken home until the child has been cleared of all nits and lice. Once it has been determined that one child in a class is infested with lice, a note will be sent to the families of all classmates alerting them of the situation and asking them to regularly check their child for a two-week period. In addition, all classmates will be checked by the Director, Assistant Director, or the Head Teacher. All classmates' belongings will be placed in separate plastic bags to be sent home. All items in the classroom that can harbor lice such as hats, dress-up clothes, and stuffed animals, will be placed in a tied plastic garbage bag and stored for one month.

Children who have been infested with lice will be allowed to return to school only after the head is inspected by the Director.

## **NUTRITION**

Our program is dedicated to the development of the whole child, which includes proper nutrition. Positive habits learned in early childhood lead to a healthier, more productive life. Our school embraces these philosophies as represented in the snacks that are provided daily. They are generally low in sugar and also contain a limited amount (if any) of hydrogenated oils or transfatty acids. We also encourage healthy eating habits and appropriate table manners in a group atmosphere. Children are encouraged to participate in serving and feeding themselves, while supervised by staff. Significant portions of an unfinished lunch will be sent home. We recommend that you refrain from sending in cookies, candy, donuts, potato chips, or other foods with little or no nutritional value for your child.

## **SUNSCREEN**

During the times of year when the sun is strong, we recommend that you apply sunscreen to your child before he or she comes to school. The sunscreen must be properly labeled and a parent/guardian must sign the Sunscreen Reapplication Permission Form. Dermatologists recommend daily sunscreen application in Southern California.

## ***Family Involvement***

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

We are fortunate to have a very active and involved parent committee. The Early Childhood Education Committee is comprised of parents from our school that meet monthly with the Early Childhood Education Director. The committee is chaired by parents in the school. The committee is responsible for all fundraising for the school. It also functions as a forum to discuss various topics relating to the school, the Temple, and early childhood developmental issues and provides input to the Director and teaching staff. We also have a representative that is the Early Childhood Liaison on the Temple Board of Trustees. If you are interested in getting involved, you may speak with the committee chairs or the Director. The Early Childhood Education Committee meetings will occur one time per month in the morning at 9:15am (some exceptions may apply).

### **FAMILY PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES**

Families are invited and encouraged to be involved in many school activities throughout the year. There are many different ways in which family members can participate and volunteer at school. Each class needs two class parents to help the teacher with school activities, distributing information to class families, and organizing teacher gifts. All families in the class may volunteer to read in the classroom, and to share special talents or information with your child's class.

Additionally, we strongly encourage you to become involved in the Early Childhood Education Committee. Families can be involved to whatever extent they would like, from simple one-time commitments to full-year commitments. For instance, volunteers are always needed to help with special events. Each event needs one or more chairpersons, as well as many volunteers to help with preparations, to work during the event, to set up, and to clean up. In addition, for parents who are unable to commit time during the school day, some events involve tasks that can be done during off hours, and many events need families to bake or donate food items.

Volunteering is not only a wonderful way to be involved in our school, but it is also a great way to get to know other families in the program and also a way to work with our Director and other staff members. Of course, attending our celebrations and events is also a wonderful way to be involved in our school!

### ***CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY***

Staff members are required by the Department of Social Services to immediately report any suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect to the State Child Abuse Hotline.

These allegations may include reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, or harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect or exploitation by an adult, whether working in the program or not.

Staff members have been trained to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect and are familiar with reporting procedures. Staff members shall and will report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the Early Childhood Director and will document any suspicion before reporting to the authorities.

### ***POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN***

1. Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the school and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency, if the parent(s) cannot be reached.
2. If a non-custodial parent has been denied access or granted limited access, to a child by court order, the school shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.
3. If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the school's daily closing, we shall do the following to ensure the following:
  - a. The child is supervised at all times;
  - b. Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
  - c. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the school, the staff member shall call the Child Abuse Hotline and/or the local police department to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.
4. The emergency contacts/approved pick up list on the Child Information Sheet authorizes staff to release a child to any of these people without notifying a parent.
5. Alternate Pick-up procedures:
  - a. If a parent knows ahead of time that they will not be picking up their child, they are to send in written permission.
  - b. If information is given by phone, the staff member that is responsible for the child's release will be notified.
6. The following procedure will be followed when a person unknown to a staff member comes to the school inquiring about a child. The person will not be able to pick-up the child until the following is satisfied:
  - a. Staff will greet individual to find out who the person is and the nature of the visit.
  - b. The person will be required to show identification (with a picture ID).
  - c. Staff will check child's alternate/emergency form to verify the information.
  - d. If all of the above are satisfied the child will be released to or visited by the person.

- If the person is not on the form, the following steps will be taken:
- a. Staff will contact parent.
  - b. If parent gives their consent over the phone, the child may be visited by or released to the person.
  - c. If a parent is unable to be reached, the child cannot be visited by or released to the person.
  - d. The incident will be properly logged by staff and parent will be informed.
7. Parent or guardian **MUST** update emergency numbers and pick-up alternates whenever a change occurs.
  8. If a parent or person authorized by the parent appear to be physically and /or emotionally impaired when picking-up to the extent that, in the judgment of the Director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the child would not be released to that person. The staff member will follow these procedures:
    - a. Staff member will try to contact the child's other parent or an alternate on the emergency form.
    - b. If the school is unable to make alternate arrangements, the staff member shall call the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline to seek assistance.

## ***INFORMATION TO PARENTS FROM DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING***

Under provisions of Title 22 Licensing for Early Childhood Centers every licensed child care center in California must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State of California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing to post a copy of our current license in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Title 22 Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the licensing regulations for child care centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review.

Our center must cooperate with all DSS inspections/investigations. DSS staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.