



Parent Handbook

2010 -2011

Dear Parents,

We are delighted that your child will be attending the Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center. We are very proud of our program and look forward to having your family become part of our preschool community.

Temple Emanuel is a place where families and children grow and learn together in a nurturing and creative environment. Our values reflect our belief that children learn best in a rich environment that focuses on the interweaving of cognitive and creative ways of thinking and learning. Our staff is truly committed to working in partnership with you and your child to provide for the highest quality early childhood experience.

Communication is very important to us! Please feel free to call with any of your questions or concerns. I can be reached at 301-942-2000 or madeline@templeemanuelmd.org. You are also welcome to stop by my office at any time to talk.

I look forward to getting to know both you and your child and sharing a rewarding preschool experience.

Sincerely,

Madeline Lowitz Gold
Early Childhood Director

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is located at:

10101 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895

The Director of Early Childhood Education, Madeline Lowitz Gold, can be reached at *301-942-2000*
madeline@templeemanuelmd.org

Hours of Operation are year-round from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm
September through August

PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

- The Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is committed to providing an exceptional early childhood education for all of our children. We are dedicated to exposing our children to the richness of Jewish values and traditions, while respecting the diversity of our families.
- We believe that our children benefit from a strong relationship between family and school. Our program is based on the spirit of “community” where children, parents and staff feel a strong sense of partnership and belonging.
- We recognize the unique qualities of individual children and feel that children learn best by being active, experiential learners. We provide a rich environment where children have the opportunity for discovery and growth. We encourage the love of learning and the development of an inquisitive mind.
- We believe that children deserve to grow at their own rate in a warm, nurturing and supportive environment.
- We believe that all children and their families should be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

A REGGIO EMILIA INSPIRED CURRICULUM

Our vision is based upon the emergent curriculum principles of the world-renowned schools for young children in Reggio Emilia, Italy. As a school community, we are committed to values based on an image of children as curious, competent, and capable of co-constructing knowledge. Our journey begins as our staff asks questions, listen to children, collaborate with children and document their work. As children discover and explore, they may work on investigations that may last a few days to a few months. All projects must be meaningful to them and their world. By creating a classroom environment that allows for open-ended learning and discovery we give children a chance to express themselves and understand their world. We also believe that learning is a cooperative venture that includes other children, their teachers, their families and our larger community. Literacy, math, social studies, science, music and arts are all emphasized through a framework of hands-on-experiences.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE REGGIO-INSPIRED APPROACH

Image of the Child

Children are viewed as “strong and powerful...as unique, having rights rather than simply needs...having potential, plasticity, the desire to grow, curiosity...and the desire to relate to other people and to communicate.”

(Rinaldi)

“The Hundred Languages of Children”

This term refers to the wide range of ways that children can communicate and represent their understandings, feeling and creative selves. These languages can be the written and spoken word, drawings, paintings, sculptures in clay and other materials, block construction, light, dance, music, movement and more.

Collaboration

Collaboration between and among all of the members of the school provides the support for teachers, children and parents to carry out the work of the school. Teachers and children collaborate on projects through large, small, and individual groupings and discussions. This allows for the co-construction of knowledge. Here, at the Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center, we are also fortunate to be part of a community that also contributes to the collaborative work of the school.

Long-Term Investigation

Investigations are a group activity, planned by the teachers and a group of interested children. Projects have no specific time limit and are revisited daily, in addition to other classroom activities.

Documentation

Documentation shows the process and the product of the children’s work. It includes samples of their work, photographs, drawings and transcriptions of their words. It is displayed in the school as a way for children to inform the learning community about the work of the children.

The Environment as a Third Teacher

The environment is thoughtfully developed to include welcoming and pleasing touches, such as flowers, plants, and a variety of materials that are arranged and organized to be visually pleasing, as well as accessible to children. The environment includes areas that encourage active exploration and creativity, as well as areas that encourage reflection and connection.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT INSPIRED BY THE PHILOSOPHY OF REGGIO-EMILIA

The Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center program is inspired by the schools of Reggio Emilia and their approach to early childhood education. We particularly focus on the relationship between teachers and students. It is more a collaboration than a didactic relationship: a partnership that respects the children's freedom of exploration, the importance and legitimacy of play and their many forms of representing the world around them. In Reggio Emilia, Italy, they call this The One Hundred Languages of Children, which includes art, music, movement, drama, constructions, and writing. Teachers carefully observe the children as they encounter new and familiar materials, work on tasks in the classroom, or have conversations.

Implementing an emergent curriculum inspired by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia is based on the fundamental philosophy that children are competent, capable learners. The teachers learn alongside the children. They provide a stimulating, open environment to help the children learn and explore. It is important for the staff to create efficient and rich areas within the classroom that build students' skills, stimulate imagination, foster creativity and provide freedom to explore and discover.

Teachers practice careful, systemic observation – taking notes and documenting children's activities and conversations. The staff helps the children to develop a practice of investigative studies through making lists, webbing, and discussions. The observations are shared with the Pedagogista (curriculum specialist) and the Atelierista (studio specialist). As teachers explore ways of expanding on children's activities, the Pedagogista provides them with guidance and support. The Pedagogista helps develop the teachers' visions within the school's teaching philosophy and assist them with assessment of investigative study content and documentation techniques.

Content study derives from the mutual interests of both the student and the teacher. The teacher engages the children by planning activities that are purposeful, meaningful, and related to something that they have observed, thereby provoking prediction, creative thinking, and problem solving. These activities or provocations are open to different results. Teachers might have a prediction of where the children will go with their activity, but should not direct them to an outcome. Staff must be comfortable with the children's explorations, even if that means that the children are not actually engaged as the staff might have thought. In that case – in the case of an activity or a provocation that does not engage the children – the teachers will meet as a team and explore a different direction for the content. Again, this is a collaborative process. Teachers always work as a team through discussion to decide on the best direction for study and curriculum content.

The exploration process of study should integrate an in-depth, hands-on approach that includes all potential resources and materials and utilizes the skills and strengths of various team members. Once the direction of the study has

been determined, the Atelierista, along with the Pedagogista, will work with the teachers to develop small or large “projects.” These may be short-term or long-term. They might be an exploration towards more research for the children or they might be a culminating project that results in a final product, performance or presentation. The Atelierista will assist in displaying documentation of projects and studies in the school’s common space and in the classrooms.

Most of what occurs in the class reflects a constructive approach to early education. Teachers assert the importance of questioning as a part of the process of learning, allowing for mistakes and being open to embark on an investigation with no clear sense of where it might end. We encourage children to ask questions and use a variety of resources to answer them – a dictionary, a sign, an encyclopedia, the computer, or an “expert” in the building. The teachers facilitate this investigation – even with small issues that are not project related – to promote good practices and develop children’s investigative skills. Teachers place great trust and value in children’s interests, ideas, thoughts and words and, so doing, empower the children in a way that will last them their whole lives.

BEGINNING PRESCHOOL

We are eager for all of our children to make a successful adjustment to preschool. Talk to your child about school and all of the great things to look forward to. Tell him or her about the wonderful things that they are going to explore at school. Children often enjoy being able to go to the store for a lunch-box and school bag several weeks before school begins.

For the first two days of school, two and three-year old students will have a shorter day than usual. Several hours can be a very long time to a child in a new situation. Please make arrangements so that you can spend time in the classroom with your son or daughter. When it is time to leave, please give your child a clear goodbye. The teachers will take over and engage your child and start developing a relationship and comfort.

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Children separate from their parents and adjust to school in many different ways. One child runs into the classroom and never looks back. Another may take several weeks to feel comfortable in a new setting. Some children make an easy transition in the beginning and have separation difficulties later in the year. All situations are normal and we are well prepared to help your child in a way that is best for him or her. We are also there to provide any support that you may need.

Parents also separate from their children in different ways. It will be helpful to both you and your child if you say goodbye happily and reassure your child that he or she is going to have a wonderful day. Your show of confidence will enable your child to do that. We are, of course, flexible in those situations that may need different or special attention.

If you need to check on your child’s progress during the day, please feel free to do so!

Security Blankets and “Comfy” Items

If your child needs an item to help her/him make the transition from home smoother, please feel free to send it. This can include a blanket, stuffed animal, or any other item your child needs. Please make sure that it is clearly labeled.

Photos

Please bring in both an individual picture of your child and a framed family photo. This will use the individual photo to identify the child’s cubby and any personal space. The family photo will make your child feel at home and remind us all that we are a partnership between home and school.

Parent Participation

We welcome and encourage parental involvement in a variety of ways. T’zevet – our parent/teacher team meets on a regular basis throughout the year. The committee, working in close collaboration with the school program, plans and organizes special events, fund-raisers and supports the curriculum and staff.

We have family activities throughout the year. These events are a great opportunity to get to know other families at the preschool and to see your child in action with their school friends. Special events include a Shabbat dinner, Thanksgiving lunch, Chanukah and Purim celebrations, Passover Seder, end-of-the year Siyyum and other school-wide family events.

Parents are always welcome for lunch, birthdays or simply for visits. We especially love welcoming guests at our weekly “*Ta’am Shel Shabbat*” (A Taste of Shabbat.) Please make arrangements for birthday celebrations with your child’s teacher. We also invite you to participate in classroom activities through-out the year.

Parent Communication

At Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center, we pride ourselves on communication. We feel that it is extremely important to be in close contact with parents in regard to your child’s day. We can talk with you during morning or afternoon pick-up or you can call during the day. Since these can be rushed and busy times for children, parents and staff, if you would like to have more than a few moments to chat we encourage you to set up a phone conference or a personal conference time with the classroom teacher. The Director is available at most times of the day and can be reached by phone, email, or just drop into the office.

Written Communication

There are a variety of ways that we communicate with parents:

- Daily Journal – A daily e-mail will be sent out each day highlighting the activities of each class and giving you a glimpse of our day. It will also remind you of calendar events.
- Documentation Boards – Are placed throughout the school and classrooms and makes our learning visible through photos and narrative.
- Parents' Bulletin Board – Notices are posted on a designated board that contains valuable notes, curriculum information, synagogue information, child development articles and other materials. Please keep an eye on it.
- Notices and letters – These are sent home frequently covering such topics as meetings, speakers, programs etc.
- School Roster – this includes addresses and telephone numbers. If you prefer that your name not be included, please let us know.
- Kol Kore newsletter – the synagogue newsletter is published monthly
- Email – each teacher has a TEECC email address for communication. Please keep in mind that it may be difficult for staff to check their email during the day while they are with the children
- Website – there will be a link for the preschool on www.templemanuelmd.org

Please Remember To Check Your Child's Cubby For Mail Each Day.

Other Communication

- Open Door Policy – We have an open door policy for parents. You may drop in any day, at any time, to join in our activities. Please remember at this time that the teachers must focus on the children, so please do not use this as a time for a conference. When you are with us, we encourage participation. Parents can read a story, lead a cooking activity or help with an art experience. Parents are welcome to share their special talents with us.
- Conferences – These individual meetings are scheduled in November. However, when a parent or teacher feels that it is necessary, we are happy to arrange a meeting.
- Back-to-School Night/Classroom Meetings – These are opportunities for parents to hear about the school's objectives, goals and purposes. It is an excellent opportunity to meet other parents in your child's classroom.
- T'zevet Meetings – These meetings may feature a speaker or program or help provide resources for our children. We welcome suggestions and encourage all parents to participate.

Contacting the School

- If you need to reach the school during the day you may call the main number at 301-942-2000 and ask for the preschool.
- You can contact the classrooms at 301-933-1504 or 301-933-1594.

- If your phone call is urgent and you can not get through to the school, please ask to speak with someone in the administrative office of the Temple and they will be glad to assist you.

OPERATIONS

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is open year round from 7:30 am – 6:00 pm. The preschool is licensed for children ages 2 – 5, therefore, a child must have had his/her second birthday in order to start preschool.

Forms Needed Before your Child’s First Day

- Health form –this health and immunization record is required by law
- Emergency Information Form
- “Permission to Treat in Case of Emergency” form
- Photo Release Form
- Sunscreen Permission form
- Off-grounds Permission form
- Tuition Contract

For your child’s safety, if there is a change in address, home or work phone numbers, emergency contacts or caregiver, please notify us in writing immediately.

Medical Immunization and Health Forms

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that all immunization and health forms be completed by a physician and submitted before a child may enter school. All children must receive appropriate vaccines and a lead test, if advised.

School Calendar

The Preschool will be closed for the following Jewish holidays:

Rosh Hashanah – two days
Yom Kippur
Sukkot

Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah
Passover – first seder & two days
Shavuot

As you may know, the Hebrew calendar runs on a lunar calendar, which varies from the solar secular calendar. Therefore, each year, the Jewish holidays are celebrated on different days on the secular calendar. Observance of Jewish holidays starts at sundown, and early closing times will be posted on the annual calendar.

The Preschool will close on the following federal holidays:

Labor Day	Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)	President's Day
Christmas Day	Memorial Day
New Year's Day	Independence Day

We will also close one day in the fall and one day in the spring for a Professional Development (date to be announced.)

In addition, we are closed for a week for winter break between Christmas and New Years Day. A short spring break is scheduled to coincide with Passover. We are also closed for a week at the end of August for teacher training and preparation for the upcoming school year.

We do not celebrate the holidays of Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day or Easter at Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center.

Billing

We have both a part-time and full-time program. Parents in the part-time program may opt to enroll for the school-year (through June) or year-round option. Parents in the full-time program are responsible for tuition from September through the end of the school year. Parents who withdraw a child for an extended period of time (e.g. vacation) are still required to pay for those months.

All fees and tuition are non-refundable.

At the beginning of each year you will receive a contract with the amount of your monthly tuition. Tuition is due at the first of each month. If you do not pay by the 5th of the month, you will be assessed a late fee of \$25. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month your child will not be able to attend until payment is made. If payment is not made by the end of the month, your child will be withdrawn from the preschool. However, if you are experiencing temporary financial difficulties, please see the director, before tuition is due, and we will attempt to work out a solution in confidence.

Application Process for New Students

An application form must be submitted with a non-refundable \$50 application fee. We give both synagogue members and siblings registration priority and priority is next given to full-time students. Registration for new students will open after the priority registration period.

All currently enrolled children are guaranteed enrollment for the following school year, provided parents return the registration form by the specified deadline and all required fees. Payment of fees must be current in order to re-enroll a child.

In December, parents of currently enrolled children will receive a registration form for the upcoming school year. In order to guarantee your child's spot for the upcoming year parents must include the September tuition and activity fee with the signed contract for the upcoming year.

Preschool Hours/Pick-Up Policy

School opens at 7:30 AM and we close promptly at 6:00 PM. It is extremely important that you arrive on time to pick up your child. Late pick-ups can cause anxiety for the children involved. It also often creates problems for the teachers on duty. In addition, we are not licensed to care for children after 6:00 pm.

We recommend that you plan to be at the Center earlier than pickup to allow yourself adequate time for unexpected traffic, a brief chat with the staff and time to exit the building.

For your child's security he or she may only be picked up by those individuals listed on your emergency authorization form. If you have not personally introduced us to this person, we will ask for identification.

The preschool requires written notification whenever the usual person is not picking up your child. For example, if a visiting grandparent or other relative is visiting, we must have written notification. This policy also includes carpooling or any other temporary pick-up arrangements.

Many parents have worked out arrangements with other families to be able to pick up their children in cases of emergency. If you expect to be late, please add those parents' names to your child's emergency authorization form. If this person will be picking your child up, please call the school and let us know. This way, we can let your child know who is picking him or her up. If we do not have formal permission, we will not release your child to another parent and you will be charged a late fee.

Each classroom has a communication notebook. If arrangements for pick-up have been changed for the day, please write this information in the notebook. For example, if a child has a play date with a classmate or is leaving at a different time, this information should be listed in the notebook.

Please be sure to sign your child in and out each day on the classroom forms. When you are ready to leave, please make sure that you tell your child's teacher that you are leaving.

Dismissal and School Grounds

Our children have three dismissal times. While some children leave at 1:00 pm or 3:00 pm, many of our children continue their school day. Please be respectful of that. In order to ensure that the children in our care are well supervised, when you arrive to pick up your children, please plan to sign them out and leave the program areas such as the classroom or playground. These areas are available for use only to children who are enrolled during that time. For example, at 3:00

pm the playground is available only to those children who are enrolled in our full-day program.

Late Fee

In the event that a parent or caregiver arrives late, there will be a late fee of \$10 for any portion of the first ten minutes and \$1 per minute there after. This applies to the 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm pick-up times.

FOOD POLICY

We follow the *Kashrut* policy of Temple Emanuel. No pork or shellfish products are permitted.

Peanuts and tree nuts

We do our best to provide a “nut-free” environment for our children. Therefore, no peanut or tree-nut products are permitted. A peanut/nut allergy can be life-threatening and it is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for all of our children.

Breakfast

Children who arrive for early-morning are welcome to bring their breakfast with them. It should be packed as lunch is and children must wash their hands before eating and sit at a table.

Lunches

Lunches should be brought each day in clearly labeled bags or lunch boxes. Because of limited refrigerator space, parents may want to put an ice pack in their child’s lunch. Thermoses (labeled) may be brought, but the staff cannot heat foods.

Please remember to alert us to any food allergies.

In order to plan a nutritious lunch for your child, try to include the following:

- Protein (egg, dairy, soy, fish)
- Fruit
- Vegetable
- Grain (bread, pasta, rice, etc.)

We strongly suggest keeping sugared foods to the bare minimum. We ask that you do not pack candy in your child’s lunch or send it in to share with others

To aid your child’s feeling of independence and to help alleviate confusion during lunchtime, please peel eggs and fruit (oranges), cut grapes, and etc. Please pack a spoon or fork when necessary. .

Snacks

Nutritious snacks will be provided in the morning and afternoon. They include such items as cheese and crackers, fresh fruit, vegetables and dip, cereal and milk and yogurt. We serve milk at snack-time and offer water with lunch, if your child does not have a drink from home.

If your child has special dietary needs, it is important that you inform us.

SECURITY, SAFETY AND BUILDING PROCEDURES

Security

The Temple Emanuel community takes security concerns seriously and, as necessary, plans are reevaluated when specific concerns arise. We will keep parents up-to-date when specific situations arise. The emergency procedure plan is evaluated and administered by the Temple Emanuel board.

Families should enter the school through the doorway that faces the side parking lot. The preschool doors are locked at all times but can be exited in the case of an emergency. Parents will be given a code to enter the doors to the preschool hallway. Please do not share this code. Please do not give this code to children or allow them to use the keypad. We teach children in school, that both the entrance and exit buttons are to be used by adults only.

It is important that these doors be securely closed behind you!

Evacuations

In the event of an emergency that requires that we evacuate we will exit the building through the doors that are closest to the child's classroom. There are three emergency exits on the school level. These are the doors adjacent to the parking lot, at the end of the hallway and indoor play area.

In the event that the preschool needs to evacuate the building, children and teachers will conduct themselves as if it were a fire alarm. Teachers have been given previous instruction of the different fire routes out of the school and a fire-drill will be held monthly. In the case that children and staff cannot return to the building they will be brought next door to the Warner Presbyterian Memorial Church.

Teachers carry copies of your child's emergency information form in the classroom backpack. This pack remains with the teacher at all times when children are out of the building.

In the event that we need to “shelter in place” emergency supplies will be stored in an accessible area.

Parking

Families may use the designated spaces in the lot adjacent to the preschool. For the safety of your children no child should be in the parking lot without supervision at any time. Please do not park in the fire lane, in front of the school entrance.

Snow Policy

It is our sincere hope that we will be able to remain open throughout the winter. However, there may be conditions that force us to close for safety reasons.

Our policy regarding closings is determined by a number of factors:

- A) If the Federal Government is closed for any reason, the preschool will be closed.
- B) If Montgomery County Schools are closed for weather emergencies, Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center Temple Emanuel will also be closed for the first day only. After that, the decision to close preschool will be based on safety conditions of the areas surrounding Temple Emanuel. If road conditions are hazardous, we will close the preschool. A decision will be made by 6:30 am and a message will be on our phone-line at 301-942-2000
- C) When Montgomery County has a delayed opening for the first day of inclement weather, Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center will open at open at 9:00 am.
- D) If we begin to experience inclement weather during the day, we will endeavor to remain open. Should we determine that it is necessary to close, will notify parents and try to give you two hours in which to arrive. It is important for you to arrange to pick up your child as soon as possible, as chances are that weather conditions will continue to deteriorate

These policies will also pertain to other emergency conditions such as hurricanes, power outages or problems with the building. When appropriate we will use a “phone tree” to communicate with parents.

CLASSROOM

Staff

All of our staff members are carefully chosen based upon the special qualities, experience and talents that they have to offer to the children in our program. As a

school that is inspired by the philosophy of Reggio-Emilia, we believe strongly in working together as a collaborative team. Each classroom has two-co-teachers and we have both a *Pedagogista* (Curriculum Specialist) and *Atelierista* (Studio Specialist) as part of our educational team.

We also believe that as educators, it is important for our teaching staff to be dedicated learners themselves. Temple Emanuel strongly supports staff development and we participate in opportunities for continuing education and professional throughout the year.

All of our teachers meet the Maryland State Department of Education licensing requirement and often exceed the necessary qualifications. All hold degrees in Education or a related field and are well acquainted with Jewish values and traditions.

Substitute teachers are interviewed by the director and must provide references, as all other staff does. They are also required to spend a day at school with us for a working interview. The director compiles an approved sub list and teachers make arrangements for their own substitutes. When one team member in a classroom is absent, the other staff member assumes the role of leading the class for that day. Our policy is that two teachers from the same classroom may not take leave at the same time; however, sometimes an emergency situation arises where that may happen.

All staff must have a complete background and finger-print check and health form completed. They are also CPR and First Aid trained.

The Early Childhood Director is responsible for overall administration in cooperation with the President and Board of Temple Emanuel.

The administrative staff of the synagogue is responsible for all preschool billing and financial record keeping. You may contact any of them if you have questions about financial issues or any forms that are in your child's records.

Reporting Abuse Policy

In Maryland, the child abuse law requires that anyone who suspects a child is being mistreated must report the matter to Protective Services or the police. "Notwithstanding any law on privileged communications, each health worker who has reason to believe that the child is neglected or abused, shall notify the relevant authorities and if acting as staff of a hospital, public health agency, childcare institution, school or similar institution, notify immediately the head of the institution or the designee of the head. Any person who in good faith makes a report of abuse or neglect is immune from any civil liability or criminal penalty."

Discipline and Guidance

The Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center recognizes that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as

individual personality, learning style, and family background. While some behaviors are typical for a specific “age and stage” we recognize that children learn appropriate social behaviors at different rates. With that in mind, we observe and make individual behavior plans when necessary.

Our staff provides a positive model of behavior by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy. We ask that all who enter our preschool help support the guidance of children, by also providing a positive model of behavior as well. We strongly believe that it is our responsibility to provide children with strategies to handle conflict, to problem solve and make positive choices.

We believe in “positive discipline” which focuses on good behavior, rather than bad. We may need to redirect a child and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm, but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove the child from the rest of the group. If a behavior persists, we will contact the child’s parents and ask them to come in for a conference so that we may work together. At that time, we will work in conjunction with the family and teaching staff on a behavior management plan that meets the needs of that particular child.

If there is continued concern, it is also our practice and policy, to consult with specialists who work with children and families. With permission of the family, these specialists can observe and access the child or provide the names of other area resources.

As a synagogue community, we believe in working with families during difficult times. We in turn ask for the family’s cooperation and assistance so that we may be able to continue our relationship with them. If we are unable to make progress in improving a child’s behavior, we may need to assess the appropriateness of our program for that particular child.

In the event that one child consistently harasses another, either verbally or physically, we will contact the parents of both children. When there is a continued problem affecting the welfare of the entire class, parents will be informed about how the issue is being addressed.

When a child hurts another child, we will first attend to the child that has been hurt and then speak with the other child. In the case of a bite or an injury where we must apply first aid, we will call the parents of both children. A written incident report will also be sent home. The privacy of all children involved in any such incident will be preserved.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special times in children’s lives. It is an important part of our school culture to share your child’s special occasion with his or her classmates. We encourage the focus of the day to be on the birthday child, rather than the

snack. As in many of the schools in Reggio-Emilia and Israel, each class will have a birthday tradition. This may include a birthday book made by the children, a decorated birthday chair or a birthday ring. Parents are encouraged to share the story of their child's birth date with the class.

With an emphasis on good eating habits, we encourage healthy birthday treats. Please contact your child's teacher in advance to plan for this. We ask that you do not send in "goody bags." Latex balloons are a choking hazard, and are prohibited.

A very special way to celebrate your child's birthday is to donate a book to the class to remember the occasion.

Please be sensitive to all children's feelings when sending out invitations to parties. Invitations may be distributed in school only if the entire class is invited.

Bringing Items from Home

We discourage children from bringing toys from home. Some classes have a scheduled "sharing" experience where children can bring items from home. Please make sure that everything brought in is LABELED, and that no belonging is extremely valuable. The staff can not be responsible for any lost items and children can be very upset when a "favorite" item is lost. Also, please make certain that no toy weapons are brought into school.

We do appreciate when parents send in a book or item that is relevant to a topic that the children are focusing on. Just let the teacher know that you are sending an item in.

If your child needs a "comfy" for transition or naptime again, make sure that it is labeled.

Clothing

When planning your child's preschool wardrobe, remember that children often get dirty using paint and other hands-on material or playing outdoors. They can also have toilet accidents. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for children to get in and out of and something that they would not feel badly about getting soiled.

Please send in a change of clothes to keep in your child's cubby in case they need to change during the day. These should include diapers (if your child wears them), pull-ups (if you have begun toilet training), or underwear, shirts, pants, and socks.

Labeling is extremely important. Please, keep track of these clothes and their seasonal appropriateness. We take the children outdoors in all types of weather. Raincoats with hoods/hats, boots, warm snow apparel, and sneakers (not party

shoes or shoes which do not provide support) are all essential, depending upon outdoor temperatures and conditions.

Shoes should be comfortable and safe for running, climbing and playing outdoors. If your child would like to wear a “special” pair of shoes to school, please send in a pair of safe playground shoes that can be kept in your child’s cubby.

Cots

Each child will have her/his own-labeled rest-time cot. Please send in a washable, size-appropriate, labeled blanket and a crib-sheet that remain at the Preschool for rest-time and will be sent home weekly for washing.

Field Trips and Site Visits

Parents are asked to volunteer to drive on field trips. Car seats must be provided. Advance notice of trips will be given.

School Photographs

School photographs are taken once a year. Individual as well as class pictures are sent home in packets and can be brought from the photographer.

Throughout the school year teachers will take pictures of preschool activities. We will often post these candid action shots on our documentation boards. Occasionally, Temple Emanuel will use these photographs in our newsletter and our promotional literature. We will ask for general permission to use photographs of your child.

Ta’am Shel Shabbat (A Taste of Shabbat)

Although Shabbat does not begin until sundown on Friday, the preschool celebrates a “*Ta’am Shel Shabbat - A Taste of Shabbat*” every Friday morning. It is a special day in our week. We celebrate and remember this day of rest that separates Shabbat from the week. Every Friday morning we gather in the Sanctuary for Shabbat songs led by Cantor Boxt, and a special story read by our religious school director, Dr. Eshel. We then return to our classrooms for blessings over the candles and a special Shabbat snack of challah and grape juice. We always welcome and encourage parents to join us.

Toilet Training

We understand that most two year olds are not toilet trained and this is not a requirement at Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center. When your child is ready, we work closely with the parent and child to toilet train the child in a consistent, calming, encouraging manner. We celebrate success and keep a positive upbeat attitude when the child has an “accident.” The parent and school

should follow a consistent and similar schedule or the child's training will be erratic. Your child's teachers will keep you posted on progress- please keep us abreast of all news, for example, when your child comes to Preschool with only underwear on!

Parents need to provide the school with diapers, wipes, and latex gloves for their child. Please bring a large size package of each to leave at school. The staff will let you know when you need to replenish.

ILLNESS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Illness is difficult for everyone and it is often a hard decision whether or not to send a child to school. For the protection of the health and well being of all children and staff at the Preschools, the following rules must be adhered to in regard to sick children.

- Fever: A child with a fever is to be excluded until fever free for 24 hours. A fever is defined as a temperature greater than 100 degrees. Children who are sent home with a fever may not return to school the following day.
- Strep Throat: Your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotics have been started.
- Vomiting: A child may return to school 24 hours after the last episode.
- Colds: A cold's symptoms are described as an irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes and sneezing. A cold may or may not include a fever. Children are often most contagious in the early, runny stage of a cold. A green discharge can signal infection and a child may return to school after 24 hours of medication.
- Diarrhea: Your child may return 24 hours after last episode.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Bacterial: Your child may return to school after antibiotic treatment has begun and eye ooze has stopped. Viral: May return with doctor's note that child is no longer contagious.
- Ear Infections: May return to school once antibiotics are administered.
- Rashes: May return to school with a doctor's note.
- Head Lice: Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center follows the guidelines of Montgomery County Schools, which at this time states that a child may return to school after being treated. The child's hair must be thoroughly washed with a prescribed shampoo and all eggs/nits combed out. In order to keep outbreaks to a minimum, we ask parents to carefully follow hair-combing procedures after treatment.
- Impetigo: Your child may return to school if on an antibiotic for 24 hours and shows definite improvement.
- Pinworms: exclusion is required until treated.

In addition, if children are feeling "under the weather" it is always best to keep them at home where they can feel more comfortable and have their individual needs taken care of.

Notification of Illness

Parents will be informed if there are a number of cases of the same illness such as strep-throat, stomach virus, conjunctivitis or the flu. In order to do this, it is important for you to inform us if your child is at home ill. Please call the school at 301-942-2000 to let us know about your child's absence

For the protection of the health and well being of all children and staff at the Preschools, the following rules must be adhered to in regard to sick children. Please do not request that a child remain indoors. If your child is too ill to go outside with us, he or she is too ill to be at Preschool.

Medication

Maryland licensing regulations stipulates the following requirements:

A parent must administer the first dose of any medication at least 2 hours before bringing the child to school. All medication that needs to be administered to your child at Preschool requires an accompanying note from the prescribing doctor. The note can be a copy of the prescription or a simple handwritten one with the signature and date of visit clearly visible.

The medication must be in its original prescription bottle and must be accompanied by the appropriate measurement spoon.

If your child has allergies, we must be informed of treatment protocol with your child's history, symptoms and reactions. These will be posted in the classroom and kept in the student folder.

If an Epi pen is used, we must have a note from the doctor and specific directions. Epi pens will be kept in the classroom emergency bag. We also suggest that you have a second one to keep in the administrator's office as back up.

Please remember that medication should never be kept in a child's bag or back pack.

Sunscreen may be applied at school with signed permission from parents. Ingredients vary from brand to brand and we ask that you have a trial at home, before sending it in.