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THE GAN

@ CHABAD AT SHORT HILLS

PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

Philosophy and Goals

The Gan at Chabad at Short Hills is a small intimate Jewish pre-school. Our mission is to provide a warm and nurturing environment where children are introduced to Jewish values and traditions, discover the joys of learning, and are gently acquainted with formal education.

The Gan sees each child as a unique and precious gift entrusted into its care. This concept is what governs the school's educational approach. At The Gan, emphasis is placed on the individual child and on encouraging each child's innate inquisitiveness and thirst for knowledge. Our preschool provides a highly creative setting where your child's unique qualities are valued and nurtured.

The school is devoted to helping children learn socialization skills, building their self-confidence and teaching them the preliminary skills to explore and experience their world independently. The goal is to provide children with the early foundation and framework to prepare them for the transition to grade school and a lifelong thirst for knowledge and growth.

The Gan is dedicated to educating children from a broad range of Jewish backgrounds and observances. Children are introduced to basic Jewish values and traditions - respect for others, kindness, being a constructive member of a community, Tzedakah, and practicing Mitzvot. These precepts and practices, as well as Jewish holiday observances are integrated into daily routines and interactive play.

Each child who enters The Gan becomes part of the Chabad Preschool family. Each of the school's early childhood educators brings to her job a unique and special blend of professional skills and personal experience. These teachers are an unusually dedicated group of professionals whose level of commitment to each child under their tutelage does not stop at the classroom door.

Finally, The Gan seeks to create a stimulating and enriching educational environment that will ignite a spark in each child to lay claim to his Jewish heritage and commit him or her to a lifetime passion for learning.



Curriculum

At The Gan at Chabad at Short Hills, we pride ourselves on our unique blend of secular and Judaic studies, which are thematic in nature. Curriculum themes are based on the time of the year and interests of the children. Jewish holidays and observances lend themselves to a rich curriculum including math, science, literacy, creative writing etc. In embracing this learning plan, children are invited to exercise their fine motor, gross motor, creative and critical thinking and socialization skills.

Young children are curious, active learners. Using age-appropriate materials, equipment and activities, our staff assists, guides, and encourages each child. Classrooms are organized to give children opportunities to explore, discover, and grow in a secure setting. We recognize each child's need to develop at his/her own pace.

The children are encouraged to test ideas, build personal resourcefulness, and experience the joys of accomplishment, while also learning to appreciate the needs, rights, and abilities of others. Classrooms include centers for dramatic play, art, literacy, writing, blocks, discovery, and fine motor as children learn through play, throughout the day. Small group activities lend themselves to individualized differentiated learning. Large group activities invite participation, attention to others, and build up attention span and stamina.



Communication between Parents and School

A fundamental part of the The Gan at Chabad at Short Hills is the partnership between the teaching staff and parents. Throughout the year, teachers and parents work closely together, sharing ideas, observations, and information. Children thrive in a positive environment best achieved with mutual trust and respect between school and home. Individual conferences and parent participation provide more opportunity for parents and teachers to exchange ideas, and in general, become part of our preschool family.

During the orientation process, please give us your impression of your child: personality, his or her dislikes, pertinent health information, etc. During the school year, please communicate to the school any changes in your child's attitude towards school. In turn, the staff will share with you the experiences they have with your child during the day.

Changes in Child's Home Environment: It is important that we know of any changes taking place in your child's environment. The birth of a baby, change of a baby sitter or family crisis can affect your child's behavior in school. The more informed we are, the more we can do to offer extra support and understanding to your child during unusually stressful times.

Parent-Teacher Conference: Parent-teacher conferences, which both mothers and fathers are encouraged to attend, are an opportunity to discuss the uniqueness of your child and to receive an in-depth view of your child's progress.

Pictures and Updates: Our class has a Parent/Teacher Whatsapp group which is where the teacher will share photos, highlights, activities and events in school.

Contacting Teachers: If you feel the need to talk to your child's teachers at any time, please call the school and leave a message for her. She will return your call at her earliest convenience. The director is also available to speak with you. Teachers are busy with your children and do not check their messages or texts during school hours. If you need to communicate something during school hours, please do so through the office.

Security

Security of our children is of primary importance. During preschool hours the building is locked and monitored by our dedicated security staff. Please notify the office and security if someone different will be doing pickup or drop off, or if there is a change of care giver etc. No child will be permitted to leave with another child's caregiver unless permission has been expressly granted by his/her parents.

Health and Safety



Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. No child is permitted to begin school without a completed and Health medical and immunizations record. In addition, no child will be permitted to start school without a signed Emergency Form, allowing the director to make any decisions pertaining to the emergency care of your child in your absence.

Illness at School: If symptoms of illness appear during the day, your child will be immediately isolated from his or her classmates and you will be contacted to pick up your child.

Illness at home: For the safety and wellbeing of all of us we are adhering to a more stringent illness policy. Please err on the side of caution and do not bring your child to school with ANY signs of illness. Including but not limited to fever, vomiting, headaches, body aches, rashes, nausea, fatigue, listlessness, or pink eye. Child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

If your child, or a member of your household is confirmed Covid, please let us know promptly. Together we can keep our school safe for everyone and eliminate the need to quarantine classes. We recognize that children will still get usual colds, flu, viruses, but due to the unusual nature of Covid 19 and the inability to distinguish symptoms of ordinary diseases from Covid 19 we ask everyone to be more stringent. Please consult with your doctor if you are unsure.

Medication: Preschool staff is not permitted to administer medication to children.

Health and Safety

Communicable Diseases: Please notify us immediately (within 24 hours) if your child or any member of your immediate family is diagnosed with any communicable or contagious illness, such as Conjunctivitis, Chicken Pox, Diphtheria, Food poisoning, Hepatitis, Hemophilus, Influenza Type B Infection, Impetigo, Measles, Meningitis, Meningococcal Disease, Mumps, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Rubella, Salmonella, Streptococcal Disease, Scarlet Fever, Tetanus, Tuberculosis, etc. We will then contact the other parents so that they may take any necessary precautions.

Medical Emergency: In case of a medical emergency, God forbid, we will immediately attempt to contact you. If necessary, we will call an ambulance or paramedics. Until your arrival the director or teacher will be in charge and make all decisions about your child's care, under the advice of your child's physician, or the paramedics. Resultant costs not covered by the school's insurance policy will be your responsibility.

Lice Check: Please check your child before the first day of School and periodically to help reduce the chance of an outbreak. We will also check your child periodically. Any signs of lice will require a professional cleaning. Children may return to school with a signed note from the professional lice cleaner.

Minor Injury: If your child receives a minor injury or bruise at school, appropriate first aid will be administered. You will be notified by the teacher or by the director indicating details about the injury.



Emergency Numbers: It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers, emergency contacts and other pertinent information. Please, make sure the school knows the most direct means of contacting you during school hours.

Behavior/Safety

The safety of our students is paramount. In the event that a child exhibits behaviors that are a danger to himself or to others, including biting, kicking, head banging etc. we will convene a meeting between the parents and the school and require an evaluation. The parents will have to provide adequate supervision at their expense, (a shadow) until evaluations are completed and the necessary support is put into place.



Food and Birthdays

Lunch and Snacks: Mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks are served. Well balanced, healthy lunches are served daily. It is unnecessary to send any food with your child.

School Birthday Parties: Children love to celebrate their birthdays at school and we recommend that you make a party in class. Please contact your child's teacher at least one week in advance so that a mutually convenient time and date can be arranged. Please refer to the Kashrut policy so that you understand the standards of food/snacks served at our school. If you wish, you may share party favors (toys) with your child's classmates.

Class Gift: If you would like to give a gift to the class on the occasion of your child's birthday, we suggest asking the teacher to suggest an item that the class can use.

Private Birthday Parties: If you plan on having a private birthday celebration for your child outside of school, please be sensitive to your child's classmates. We recommend that you invite all your child's classmates or all of your child's classmates of the same gender to his or her party. Children are sensitive to being excluded, even those as young as three years old. Including some children from your child's class and not others can create hurt feelings. Also please be sensitive to the dietary and the religious observances of your child's classmates.

What to Send to School

Change of Clothes: Please send to school with your child a full change of clothes, marked with your child's name in a ziplock plastic bag. The clothes will be kept in school for use as needed.



Toilet Training: Children do not need to be toilet-trained to attend Chabad Preschool. We will change diapers as long as needed. If your child is not toilet-trained, please send a package of diapers or pull-ups and a box of baby wipes. These will be marked with your child's name and kept in a bathroom cabinet.

Clothing: When choosing your children's school clothes, please keep in mind that easy, comfortable and washable clothing is best. Choose simple and practical clothing that is free of complicated fastenings, and easy to handle in the bathroom. Even though Chabad Preschool uses washable paints, art projects and materials can be very messy, even for those children who wear the smocks we provide. Outdoor play can be tough on clothing so please choose attire that is sturdy. Last, please label all your children's clothes with his/her name.

Toys from Home: Except for special programs such as Show & Tell, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home.

Arrival and Dismissal

Drop Off: All children will be dropped off at the steps at the entrance to the Social Hall. A staff member will greet your child, complete a daily “health check” and then escort your child inside. Please do not drop off your child at school before his or her starting time. Teachers arrive early to prepare their day's class materials and projects. If you do arrive early, please stay outside with your child until teacher arrives.

Late Arrival: We urge you to be prompt and arrive on time. Your child will adjust best if he or s/he begins the day together with the rest of the class. In addition it is disruptive to the class when a child comes in late. In the event of lateness please inform the office to arrange for a teacher to meet you at entrance of the Social Hall entrance.

Pick up: All children will be picked up from the steps at the Social Hall. A staff member will bring your child to you and have you sign out. A child will not be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up that child. It is your responsibility to list on the Dismissal Form all the people who are authorized to pick up your child from school.

If you plan on having your child picked up by someone who is not listed on the Emergency Form, you must contact the office and one of your child's teachers.

It is very important to your child that you arrive on time. Young children get flustered if there is an unexpected change in their daily routine. If you know you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we can notify your child's teacher and reassure your child. Please be aware that your child’s teachers are not available to watch children after school hours.

Snow days/School Closing: In the event of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances we will send out an email and whatsapp message notifying you of school closing.

Holidays, Family Vacation & Early Withdrawal



Every child is enrolled for the entire school year. Since most of the school's cost are fixed and do not vary according to daily attendance, the school cannot issue refunds or credits for illness, holidays or family vacation.

Make-up Days: Make-up days are not available.

Early Withdrawal: In the event of early withdrawal, you will be refunded a pro-rated amount of the tuition balance of the annual tuition.

Unexpected Closures: In the event that school is mandated to close for longer than a two week period (10 school days) tuition will be refunded for the period of no school. Individual quarantining is not included. Please note less than 10 school days of closure will not be included in this policy.



CHABAD PRESCHOOL LUNCH MENU

	Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday	Thursday:	Friday:
Lunch	Bagels, spreads & Cut vegetables	Chicken Nuggets Rice Steamed vegetables	Pizza Fries Salad	Mac & Cheese Israeli salad	Challah, Dips & Shabbat Treat

Snacks - Daily Morning and afternoon snacks rotationally:

Rice Cakes/whole grain crackers, Graham crackers, American cheese, pretzels, pickles, raisins
apples, bananas, clementine, watermelon, oranges, pineapple, melon, apple sauce.

Water is always available to the children.



Contact information

Chabad office number	973-535-1800	office@chabadatshorthills.org
Chana Solomon, Director	973-725-7009	cdsolomon@chabadatshorthills.org
Ruth Livshin, Teacher		preschool@chabadatshorthills.org

To contact the director or a teacher during school hours please call the office and leave a message.