



PARENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

Updated July 2024



Come learn. Come play. Come home.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Noreen Cook Center for Early Childhood Education of Har Zion Temple provides excellence in Jewish early childhood education. We ensure a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the Judaic, social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of young children. At the same time, we respond to the needs of their families. A developmentally appropriate program for our young learners and their families is the foundation for the ongoing development of a curriculum, for our Rose and Joseph Schimmel Preschool and our Har Zion Temple Kindergarten, which integrates Judaic values into everyday life experiences.

PHILOSOPHY

The Noreen Cook Center Curriculum is based on current knowledge of how children develop, grow and learn. Such knowledge provides the framework for incorporating the best practices in early childhood education, as well as the best ways to foster growth of spiritual and moral values inherent in Conservative Judaism. Our early childhood curriculum serves as the foundation for secular and Jewish education and Jewish life for the years following those spent in our school.

We Believe:

- In educating the whole child by nurturing a child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.
- In fostering independence and creativity, and appreciating each child's individual needs and talents.
- Preschool is a time for children and their families to strengthen their connection to Judaism and its traditions.
- Preschool is when children form friendships that last a lifetime.

PROGRAM GOALS

Judaic:

- To provide opportunities for each child to take part in an enriched Jewish life.
- To promote the partnership between the school, home and Har Zion Temple, in order to strengthen families and integrate them into congregational life.

Social-Emotional:

- To develop a sense of self-esteem and exhibit a positive attitude toward life.
- To promote skills of independence, self-confidence, self-control and responsibility.
- To recognize the intrinsic value of play and provide opportunities for cooperative, constructive and creative play.

Cognitive:

- To provide opportunities for young children to be active participants in their own learning process, constructing their own best way to learn through varied and repeated experiences.
- To provide a continuum of skills and experiences which meet the needs of individual students, as they grow and develop within a dynamic classroom setting.
- To develop learning experiences which engage the whole child - mind, body and personality.
- To enable the child to explore, discover and exert creative effort in order to problem-solve and make sense of his/her world through logical thinking.
- To acquire concepts and thinking leading to a fuller understanding of their world.
- To expand verbal communication skills and build on beginning skills of reading, writing and math.
- To promote caring for and protection of our environment and the world around us.

Physical:

- To enlarge the world for each child by teaching respect for and appreciation of each human being regardless of culture, sex, age and ability.

- To promote gross and fine motor skills and apply the principles of learning through the senses.

REQUESTS FOR CLASS PLACEMENTS

Each year, the school administration goes through a very thoughtful process for each child's placement, looking both at the interest of the individual child and the class. In the spring and during the summer we speak with our teachers and together, determine placements for the following school year. Please know that many factors go into forming classes such as gender ratios, recommendations from current staff, friendships from previous years, and individual characteristics of the children and the staff. We will make every effort to place your child with some classmates from the prior year, however, we also want to ensure that they can expand new relationships, as that is important in their overall development.

We do not accept requests for specific teachers or students. Placements will not be made based on students' future elementary school, neighborhoods, or family friendships. Class assignments cannot be changed per parental request.

If you feel there is something we should know about your child, such as learning and play styles, please email Sandi Toben, Director of The Noreen Cook Center for Early Childhood Education, at stoben@harzientemple.org

We appreciate that you will trust our judgment in placing your child with the best intentions for each individual and the group. We care about each and every child and work to find the best possible placement for everyone.

REFUNDS

There are no tuition refunds for illness, vacation or snow days.

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY: No refunds will be issued and/or credit transferred to any other division of Har Zion Temple for any reason unless adjustments need to be made because of the pandemic. Exceptions to this policy can only be made with written approval by the Executive Director. Please note that if there are any special circumstances or problems of which the school should be aware, please contact our Noreen Cook Center Director before this application is filed. This application is a legally binding contract whether in-person or virtual learning is provided. If HZT determines, in its discretion based on circumstances involving the pandemic or otherwise, that school must transition from in-person to virtual learning for an extended period of time (which would be longer than 2 full class weeks), partial adjustments/refunds will be made for the length of time beyond those first 2 full class weeks that virtual learning is conducted, pursuant to the following: 2s would be adjusted/refunded 50%, 3s and PreK would be adjusted/refunded 33.3%, and Kindergarten would be adjusted/refunded 25% of tuition. All financial obligations owed to Har Zion Temple for the above-named child are the responsibility of both parents. This application will not be processed unless both parents acknowledge this financial obligation by signing below. Any exceptions or special circumstances require the prior written approval of the Director of Lifelong Learning.

Please note- Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Civil Rights compliance, Department of Public Welfare, and/or the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

CLOTHING

Please send **2** complete changes of clothing in a large zip lock bag to be kept in school all year (socks, shirt, pants, underwear). THE CHILD'S NAME SHOULD BE ON EACH ARTICLE.

- Don't forget to update clothing for size and to accommodate seasonal change (long-sleeved shirts/pants in winter)

CLEARLY LABEL all boots, hats, and jackets with your child's name.

Children need to come to school dressed for active and participatory play. We do not want to hamper their creative experiences with clothing which restricts them in any way or which they are afraid will get "mussed". **Sturdy and protective shoes are a necessity.** As Friday's are special days in preparation for Shabbat, children may dress accordingly, but should continue to wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

It is also important that the outfits be conducive and child friendly for "pottying" and teacher and child friendly for diapering; elastic waistbands and loose-fitting clothing work the best. Please note that one-piece suits, onesies, overalls, belts and suspender type clothing make it very difficult for preschool age children to be independent in their bathroom process. Our aim is to make every experience a positive one!

LUNCHES, SNACKS, AND ALLERGIES

As the synagogue and the school observe the dietary laws of Kashrut, all food brought into the building must be Kosher according to the standards of the Conservative Movement.

FOOD

1. The school will provide a small snack in the AM and for those that stay for Kids Knowledge College or Late Care. Typical snacks include pretzel sticks, Cheez-its, Graham crackers, and Ritz crackers. On Fridays, Challah will be served. Snacks are subject to change and based on availability from the synagogue's food supplier.
2. You may pack a DAIRY OR PARVE snack for your child daily if your child will not eat the provided snack.
3. Hot Lunch from the synagogue must be ordered and paid for in advance. **No refunds will be made for pre-ordered lunches.**
4. If your child stays beyond noon and does not purchase lunch, please send in a DAIRY OR PARVE LUNCH to school with your child. **No meat or meat products or those using animal beef fat, lard, etc., may be brought into school.**

Some suggestions:

Noodles with or without butter, hummus, eggs, tuna, bagel and cream cheese, veggies and dip, yogurt, cheese, cereal, granola, pancakes, waffles, french toast, pizza, guacamole, mac and cheese, cut up fruit, jelly sandwich, cheese sandwich, falafel, pasta salad, veggie burger, and more!

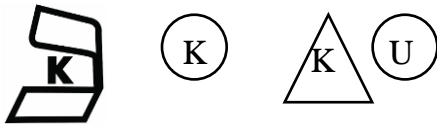
5. Packed snacks and lunches should come in a labeled container. Lunchboxes are not refrigerated. It is suggested to use thermoses and ice packs to ensure food is at the proper temperature. There is no use of a microwave for student lunches. The school will provide paper supplies and utensils if needed. Staff will throw away any disposable bag(s) after use.
6. Please be aware of our goal of encouraging good eating habits. Pack enough for your child to enjoy, but not so much they cannot finish. And please limit sweets and non-nutritious snacks.

BAKED GOODS

Parents may send in pre-packaged goods to celebrate their child's birthday. This will be distributed by the teacher. Baked goods from ONLY the following establishments are permissible for use at Har Zion Temple:

Entenmanns Baked Goods
Giant Bakery in Wynnewood
Acme Bakery in Narberth

ALL PREPACKAGED CAKES OR COOKIES MUST HAVE A SYMBOL OF KOSHER CERTIFICATION. THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS ARE AMONG THE MOST PREVALENT AND ACCEPTABLE:



We kindly ask that **NO HOME BAKED** products be brought into the synagogue for sharing.

ALLERGIES

YOU MUST NOTIFY US IN WRITING OF ANY ALLERGIES YOUR CHILD MAY HAVE.

The NCCECE is an **ALLERGY AWARE SCHOOL**. Our goal is to keep all children safe in our school environment. We strongly request that peanuts and peanut butter not be sent into school. We do this to protect the safety of our students with severe peanut allergies. We cannot guarantee a peanut-free environment, but we will do our best. Food products containing nuts or traces of nuts, or prepared on equipment where foods containing nuts or traces are prepared, may not be served or brought into classrooms.

A child with allergies will be seated at a "safe" table per their dietary restriction. Teachers will check all lunches daily to make certain that the child with allergies sits at a safe table. Friends with "safe" lunches may also be able to sit with the child.

SCHOOL WIDE EVENTS REGARDING ALLERGIES

Before any school wide event, we will send out an email informing you of all food that will be served. If your child has an allergy to any food being served contact us as soon as possible so we can discuss an alternative.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are an experience in sharing for all children. Please discuss plans for a class party in advance with the teachers. Parents will be permitted to send in pre-packaged, certified kosher treats for the class to celebrate their child's birthday.

When planning home birthday parties, since many of our families observe Shabbat and *Yom Tov* (holiday) days (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simhat Torah, the first two and last two days of Pesach, and Shavuot), we request our families not to have birthday parties on Shabbat or *Yom Tov* days (Friday sundown to Saturday sundown for Shabbat and sundown to sundown for *Yom Tov*). We strongly suggest that parties be on Sundays and weekdays. *Please be sensitive to the needs of others when choosing your party menu, so that all children can enjoy it.*

To support inclusion of all students, birthday invitations will only be distributed at school if the entire class is invited.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

School communication is very important at the NCCECE. We understand the need for conversations between teachers, parents, and school administrators. Our teachers are dedicated to their work and commitment to providing your children a safe and engaging environment. Please see below on appropriate communication modes.

REMINI

Remini is an APP on your phone. At the beginning of the year you will receive an invite to download the app and view your child's class list. This is where teachers will share pictures and class news. Important information will be sent via Remini from school administration throughout the year. Remini will send an email notification when there is an update to view.

EMAIL

Each Head Teacher will provide you with an email address to contact them. Teachers check their emails after class hours and will respond in a timely fashion. In this way, you may request a telephone conversation, or a personal meeting with your child's teacher.

Early and Late Care Staff, Kid's Knowledge College Assistants, and Classroom Assistants are not permitted to email our families to discuss scheduling changes or to discuss concerns about your child. Please email your meeting request directly to the Lead teacher and all schedule changes should be directed to the school office.

TEACHER CELL PHONE NUMBERS

Some of our lead teachers may decide to share their phone numbers with you. This is not a requirement. In order to ensure boundaries and professionalism are kept, please keep in mind the following:

We do not allow cell phone usage in the classroom while students are present. Teachers must be engaged in activity and supervise the students during school hours.

In order to get an urgent message to a teacher, it is best to call the school office (610) 667- 5000 and ask that a message be delivered to that teacher.

If it is a non-urgent matter, we suggest writing an email to the teacher who will reply after hours in a timely manner.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT WITH OUR NCCECE STAFF

It is important that our staff maintain appropriate relationships and boundaries with NCCECE families. Occasionally parents will ask a staff member to transport a child home and/or babysit. While parents can arrange for a staff member to transport a child home from the NCCECE, staff members are not allowed to babysit for current children in their class. Previously established relationships will be addressed on an individual basis. Please note, transporting and babysitting of NCCECE children are private transactions between the staff and the parents.

TELEPHONING THE SCHOOL

The school office typically has someone available to speak Monday- Thursday 8:30AM - 5:00PM, and until 3:00PM on Fridays. The NCCECE administration likes to be up and active and often in classrooms away from their desk. If it is urgent, please leave a message and office staff will alert us. Please contact the below individuals to address any concerns:

Sandi Toben
Director of NCCECE
(610) 667- 5000 EXT. 115
Stoben@harziontemple.org

Missie Pludo
Director of Student Services
(610) 667-5000 EXT. 119
mpludo@harziontemple.org

Ashley Waldman
Early Childhood Coordinator
(610) 667 – 5000 EXT. 116
awaldman@harziontemple.org

Rabbi Shawn SimonHazani
Director of Lifelong Learning
(484) 758 – 7726
Rabbishawn@harziontemple.org

Gavi Miller
Executive Director
(610) 667 – 5000 Ext. 105
Gmiller@harziontemple.org

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. Please

check the school calendar. If you wish to discuss your child's progress at other times, please call the school office at 610-667-5000, or email your child's teacher and a meeting can be scheduled.

Our teachers are always willing to communicate with parents to ensure that the programs from which the children come and go from one year to the next provide continuity over time. Changes that affect children, such as changes in room or teacher or use of special services, are discussed with parents before decisions are made. The program has an effective way of negotiating difficulties and differences that arise. Some techniques to handle differences might include special conferences, or individual meetings.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FROM HOME & CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing us as soon as possible. We strongly encourage you to maintain clear and consistent communication with our staff. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes which may affect your child's behavior or sense of security. Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially. In the event of a divorce or separation, The Noreen Cook Center for Early Childhood Education cannot make determinations as to preferential treatment for parents without legal documentation.

Children's records are open to parents, legal guardians, teachers and the Director. Information will not be disclosed to anyone other than the above without the written permission of the parent or legal guardian.

We will not verify a child's enrollment or attendance in school to anyone via the telephone or without the written consent of the parent or legal guardian.

UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSING

The Noreen Cook Center generally follows the snow closing and delayed opening policy of the Lower Merion School District.

A decision about school cancellations or delays is usually made by 6:00 AM. In case of a delayed opening, all ½ day children are welcome to arrive at the indicated time. In case of a delayed opening on a Friday, Shabbat Services will take place at an appropriate time to be determined.

If we need to close school early due to the onset of inclement weather, **you must have arrangements in place for your child's pickup.** We realize this may be inconvenient for some working parents; however, it is imperative for the safety and welfare of your child and our staff that you arrive in a **timely manner** after being notified of our closing.

We will be sending you a text and email via Remini, letting you know if there are any changes to our normally scheduled school day.

We are not responsible for school closings due to inclement weather. We must take into account the safety of our children, parents, and staff when closing the school.

SECURITY

We are mindful and appreciative of all the security measures that our facility and school offers for our students and community. We have a multilayered security approach and are continuously updating our security to the highest standards. The safety of our students and staff are of the utmost importance.

Although we strive to have an “open door policy” for our families, in our effort to protect the school environment, a child’s parents or caregivers will NOT be permitted to enter the school wings for drop off or pick up, absent extraordinary circumstances to be determined by the school Director or designee or there is a pre-scheduled meeting or event.

1. If a parent is permitted to enter the building, they must be buzzed in only during a permitted time, meaning: pre-scheduled meetings and certain events throughout the school year.
2. **AT ALL TIMES, PARENTS MUST EXIT FROM THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE ONLY** (near the gift shop). Leaving from the downstairs door will set off an alarm. You must not leave and hold the door open for anyone. Acting in such a way is counterproductive to all of our work to keep the building and our children secure.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

REMINDERS:

- For the safety of all children and adults at HZT, we ask that **NO CELL PHONES** be used (this includes hands-free and Bluetooth) while you are driving on campus.
- Do not park in RESERVED SPACES or block the fire zone at the entrance at any time.
- Please obey all signs for entering and exiting from the Har Zion grounds.
- **Please observe the 5 MPH speed limit.** Too many cars have been speeding through the active lot.
- All arrival/dismissal drop-offs and pick ups will occur at the school entrance

DROP OFF PROCEDURES

- Drop off time is 8:45-9:00AM. Please try to arrive on time each day. Our

teachers have full days of fun and learning each day and everyone can start on the right foot if you arrive on time.

- You can pull into the car line or you can park in a non-assigned parking space and wait at the bottom of the stairs. **If you are in the car line, you must remain in the car! This is for your safety.**
- Parents will not be permitted in the building during drop off.
- For arrivals we will be using the following doors:
 - The Upstairs school entrance for Shorashim, Prachim
 - The Downstairs school entrance for Shalom Chai and Garinim
- If you know that you will not be able to arrive during the arrival time period, You will need to park and walk your child to the School entrance security desk. Please understand if you must wait a few minutes until someone from the school staff can come to assist.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES:

Parents will not be permitted to enter the building for pick up. We value the teacher-parent connection and will have ample opportunities for parents to see their children in class as well as speak with the teacher through email, phone calls, and in-person meeting. If you need to conference with a teacher, please feel free to reach out and schedule a meeting with that teacher.

- Pick up will be from 3:05 to 3:15pm. Students will not be released until 3:05pm.
- **All parents/caregivers must have the dismissal card that displays the child's name each and every day. This is a security measure and no child will be released without a dismissal sign.**
- If you need to pick up your child prior to 3pm or not at your designated pick up time, please email your child's teachers and the school office so they can have the child prepared. You will need to park and meet your child at the School Entrance security desk. Please understand if you must wait a few minutes until someone can come to assist. **Please make all early pickups prior to 2:45pm to ensure a smooth dismissal procedure.**

Be sure your child understands who will be taking him/her home and whether his/her transportation is by carpool or bus.

It is the responsibility of each parent in the individual carpools to notify the designated driver of the day, as well as your child's teacher, if your child is not returning home in their assigned carpool.

Please make sure any person permitted to pick up your child is on the release form enclosed and has a photo on file. Please notify the school of any changes in this information.

VOLUNTEERING

The NCCECE wants to invite all families to join their students in the classroom and school throughout the year.

Families will be invited to join us for our Hanukkah celebration, Purim parade, and Passover celebration. Additionally, each student in the Garinim, Shorashim, Prachim, and Gan will have a Shabbat Star Day where their family will be invited to join our Friday morning Kabbalat Shabbat. Prachim will have a move up ceremony and Gan will have a graduation ceremony in which families are invited to join.

Our wonderful H.S.A. creates and helps facilitate many events throughout the school year both during and after school hours. Volunteering for our H.S.A. board and events are a great way to connect with other NCCECE families and see your children engaged with their peers.

All volunteers and visitors must comply with all health policies. All visits and volunteer opportunities will be pre-scheduled.

GIFTS

Often parents wonder how they can show appreciation to their child's teachers for all the hard work and good teaching.

Please note that the HSA provides gifts for our teachers and staff during Hanukkah as well as for Teacher Appreciation Week.

When the school year comes to a close parents are encouraged to express their thanks through personal letters of appreciation. In the past, some parents have given a combined class gift at the end of the school year. Parents may want to honor the staff through donations to Tzedakah as another option.

TZEDAKAH

Every Friday, money for Tzedakah will be collected. Please send a few pennies with your child in order to reinforce this precious mitzvah. During the course of the year, we hope to sensitize our children to the needs of those less fortunate, through other kinds of Tzedakah projects as well.

THE LUNDY INCLUSION INITIATIVE

The Lundy Inclusion Initiative is a unique intra-professional program that brings therapist and licensed professional services directly to our NCCECE families. This program was founded in 2023 and was made possible by a generous donation from the estate of Marvin Lundy. The program emulates the NCCECE's core values in diversity, individuality, and equity.

Our panel of experts include a number of therapists and licensed professionals that will work with our staff to support our students' needs. We will have the following professionals working closely with our staff:

Behavioral Therapist: Sarah Curran works on plans to assist children in achieving appropriate behavior in the classroom, following class procedures, etc.

Occupational Therapist: Amy Peterson works on activities related to the "occupation" of children -- namely play, attention and following directions.

Psychologist: Dr. Roseanne LeSack may provide observations of children's cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral skills; may also consult with parents about related issues.

Speech-Language Therapist: Stacy Axelman works on language development, which may include language production, articulation, and fluency.

Staff need training and resources to be effective at creating an inclusive classroom that meets all needs of all students. Our Inclusion Panel will provide the following to our teaching staff:

- Professional development training: Each speciality and domain will be discussed. Strategies will be introduced and taught. Resources will be presented.
- Classroom visits: Initial visits to view the classroom set-up, routines, and rules. Feedback will be provided to the teachers. Additional classroom visits are possible to assist teachers in setting up a system, strategy, or routine.
- Virtual Office Hours: Teachers will be able to ask for additional strategies and get feedback on any concerns they have for their students.
- Student Observation: With parental consent, an observation will be made of a student in the classroom setting and feedback will be provided. Additional strategies and/or therapies may be recommended.
- Resource Room: Teachers will have access to additional classroom items needed to meet each student's individual needs.

The professionals in the Lundy Inclusion Initiative are not employees of the

school, but are third party contractors that are licensed and have completed a full background check. Additional professionals may be in private practice, or hired by public or private agencies, Early Intervention Services, or the Intermediate Unit (IU) of Montgomery County or Delaware County. These professionals are contracted by parents of individual children to work only with their children.

The Director of Student Services, Missie Pludo, will be coordinating the Lundy Inclusion Initiative along with Sandi Toben, Director of Early Childhood Education. The Director of Student Services will coordinate all therapists and professionals that work with our students. They will also provide hands-on support for teachers to introduce and train teachers in new strategies and work together to problem solve in creating the best learning environment for each student.

If your child is seen by any special service instructors and/or your child has an IEP, 504, or other behavioral or differentiated learning plan, this information must be shared with the Director of Student Services.

If you have concerns about your child's behavior or learning abilities, please reach out to our Director of Student Services to set up a meeting. We are happy to connect and discuss appropriate services and strategies with you.

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT POLICIES

Our goal is to assist and enable our children to grow toward self-regulation and a high level of social emotional intelligence. We recognize that such growth is often a "start-and-stop" progression and uneven. The NCCECE welcomes all children and is committed to providing a developmentally appropriate learning environment in which all students feel safe to learn, grow, and play. Each child is unique. We believe partnerships with families and other professionals is the key to providing the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

Our inclusion philosophy begins in the classroom environment. Our staff use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of their current students when planning learning opportunities and activities. Teachers will make adaptations or modifications as needed to meet the needs of the students. Our classrooms are flexible and play-based. We are committed to working with our Lundy Inclusion Initiative therapists, other professionals in Early Intervention, the Montgomery County I.U. and others to integrate strategies, modifications, and IEP accommodations into classroom routines and activities. Any changes will be reviewed with the family along with their student's support team. The classroom environment is set up to reach each student's unique needs and allow each student to grow and thrive.

Inclusion means all learners together. Your child is unique and will encounter countless other unique peers and people in their lifetime. The NCCECE believes inclusion is a beautiful environment for social and emotional development and encourages all students to value a sense of belonging, respect for all, and equality of opportunity. All students of all abilities can learn from each other. Routines and activities will be adapted so all children can participate and support will be added when needed in a way in which it does not hinder others.

The NCCECE believes in positive behavior reinforcement and each staff member will employ strategies aligned with our inclusion and positive reinforcement philosophy. These strategies include, but are not limited to, modeling, redirection, discussion, and classroom routines that allow and promote proactive work to avoid undesired behaviors. We also will remove a child from a difficult situation, giving him/her another opportunity to resolve a conflict in a positive way, and thus enabling him/her to seek an alternative to the questionable behavior.

BITING AND HARMFUL BEHAVIOR

Sometimes children engage in dangerous or harmful behaviors regardless of the strategies, routines, rules, and environment. These behaviors are part of normal child development. It is important for children to experiment and learn boundaries. However, safety is important and we will always work to create a peaceful environment for all.

Biting and physical contact (including hitting, kicking, scratching, pushing, and spitting with malicious intent) can be a form of expression in children, especially those children who have limited verbal skills. Biting is a powerful way to exhibit control and release frustration. Studies show that by the age of three, almost all biting and most hitting behaviors disappear. While biting is considered typical behavior for young children two years of age and younger, it is detrimental to the safety and well being of children and staff in a classroom setting.

After a child intentionally causes harm to another one time, the teacher will contact the parents of both the biter and the recipient. The Director will be informed of the incident.

1. If the child causes harm a second time, the same protocol will follow. A school administrator will conduct a classroom observation of the child. Based on the type and severity of the behavior, the school administrator will confer with the classroom teachers on appropriate strategies and corrective behavior modifications to put in place. The school administrator will call the parents to discuss observation and strategies moving forward.
2. If the child causes harm a third time, the same protocol will be followed, and a parent may be required to pick up their child from school.
3. After a third incident, a conference will be necessary (teacher, parents & Director) and a corrective plan of action will be put into place.

Parents, as partners in our efforts, may be called in to confer on a corrective plan to resolve our concerns. Often, with parents and teachers working together, behavior can be improved. The teachers will propose a specific behavior modification plan and strategies tailored to your student's needs.

Sometimes a child may need more support than our school environment can provide. In such a situation, we will work with the parents and our Lundy Initiative Inclusion panel to arrange for a recommended professional observation of the child in the classroom. Following the classroom visit, the professional will make recommendations either during a feedback session or in writing to the child's parents, the classroom teacher, and the school administration. Some of the recommendations may include but are not limited to:

- Creating an individualized behavior modification chart, picture schedules, or social stories
- Modifying enrollment hours if possible (ex: sometime children will only nap at home - a 12 noon dismissal may be recommended)
- Recommendation to parents to contact Early Intervention or the

Montgomery County I.U.

- Requiring one-on-one supervision of the child while enrolled in a typical classroom at the expense of Early Intervention, the M.C.I.U., or the family.

If after all attempts to support the child in an inclusion environment have been made, all strategies and professional and supervised interventions have been exhausted, and the school administration team feels that they are inadequate to meet the student's needs and/or the needs of other students in the class, a student may be asked to leave our school. We believe every child deserves the best preschool learning environment for their unique needs and if we cannot provide that, we will advocate for the child to find the correct placement for their successful developmental needs.

EXPULSION

The expulsion of a child (termination of the ECC Contract) is not a decision that is taken lightly and happens only in exceptional circumstances. This policy is required by the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development, Education and Learning (OCDEL). In addition, the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development, Education and Learning (OCDEL) has a mandate to include children with special needs, and its staff must make every possible effort to do so before canceling a contract.

If a developmental or behavioral problem is reported, all steps will be taken to include the child as described in our Behavioral Support Policy (above). After these steps are taken, a recommendation for the child to be withdrawn from the NCCECE may be made if the school administration team feels that the child's needs cannot be met. Parents and caregivers will be given a maximum period of two weeks to allow them to find other childcare options for their child unless the situation presents a clear and present danger to the health and well-being of the other children and the staff. If a clear and present danger is evident, parents will be asked to remove the child immediately. The NCCECE will cancel the contract with the parents or caregivers.

If, because of refusal by parents or guardians to obtain services and the teachers and staff must devote an excessive amount of time or attention to one child to the detriment of others, we have no other choice than to cancel the contract at the NCCECE.

POLICY REGARDING PARENTS WHO REFUSE SERVICES FOR A CHILD WITH A DIAGNOSED DISABILITY (as defined by U.S. Code 42 Chapter 126 § 12102) OR A DOCUMENTED DEVELOPMENTAL or BEHAVIORAL PROBLEM

Please note that this is a measure only taken after all other options have been exhausted. All the appropriate documentation must be placed in the child's file.

The NCCECE may demand that a parent remove his or her child from our program under the following circumstances:

- Parents' or caregivers' exhibit physical or verbal abuse towards a member of the staff, a child, other parents, or any other person on site.
- Noncompliance with the internal regulations of the NCCECE.
- Failure to comply with NCCECE policies and procedures.
- Abusive Behavior towards any NCCECE or Har Zion Temple employee or towards another NCCECE family member, or synagogue member.
- Any physical abuse towards a NCCECE or Har Zion Temple employee, NCCECE family, or Har Zion Temple member.
- *Before termination of any service contract, except for verbal or physical abuse, parents will first receive a verbal notice and/or a warning letter for every noncompliance situation. If there has been no improvement or modification of the unacceptable behavior, a final notice canceling the child's registration at the Center will be issued.*

HEALTH POLICIES

Health is always of primary concern at the NCCECE. Please help us prevent exposing young children and our staff to sickness. ALL students must be immunized in accordance with the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics. **The NCCECE strongly encourages parents to speak with their pediatrician about vaccinating your child against Covid-19.**

1. Self- Assess Health Screening policy: Can my child come to school?

Parents must self-assess their child at home prior to leaving for school.

- The child will be admitted if the following criteria are met:
 - NO fever above 100.3 F
 - NO fever reducing medicine has been administered within the past 24 hours
 - NO fever in the past 24 hours
 - NO cough, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell, excessive runny nose, sore throat, diarrhea, abdominal pains, or vomiting in the past 24 hours
 - NO contagious diseases
 - NO unidentified rashes
 - NO untreated head lice

2. A student may be sent home from school if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Sore throat
- Extreme fatigue
- Thick mucus or pus draining from eyes or nose
- Persistent coughing

For the above symptoms, a student may not return to school until they are 24 hours clear of that symptom. For example, a student is sent home Monday with diarrhea, the diarrhea stops Monday night. That student will be diarrhea free for 24 hours Tuesday night meaning the student can return on Wednesday.

- Any contagious disease

For the above symptom, a student will need a doctor's note stating that the student is no longer contagious and passes the Self- Asses Health Screening above.

- Unidentified rash until diagnosed as not infectious

For the above symptom, a student will need a doctor's note stating that it is not contagious.

- Head lice

For the above symptom, a student may return 24 hours after effective treatment. Your child will be checked before re-entry is permitted.

3. It is preferred that children who need medication be given their dosages before and after school. When this is not possible, we need both written parental permission and prescription label or note of instructions from the doctor in addition to a completed *Medication Permission Form*.

4. Please notify the school if your child is to be absent for longer than two (2) days.

5. Report to the school **immediately** any exposure to contagious diseases.

6. Report to the teachers any important information like a fall, unusual behavior, special family stresses, etc. so we can be sensitive to any further complications or developments.

7. All children must have all health forms and immunization records completed and returned to the school before the first day of school. Consult your pediatrician if you have any questions.

8. The CDC now classifies Covid-19 with other respiratory illnesses such as the flu. Our above illness indicators (Number 1 and 2 of this section) will dictate

the response needed for school absences.

9. The NCCECE prioritizes the health of our community as well as the medical confidentiality of each person. Families will be notified each time of a positive case of a contagious disease such as Covid-19, Flu, Pink Eye, Strep Throat, Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease, Lice, etc. when your child is deemed a close contact. Typically for the school year that means your child's class. Please note this means you will not be notified of an exposure to an exposure (secondary contact). The NCCECE will not give information regarding who the positive case is and will not give information about their specific symptom timeline.

10. Currently, the NCCECE is a mask optional facility.

Staff Policies

- Staff will be subject to the same health protocols as the children.

*Please note this information and guidance can change at any time with or without notice. We will follow our licensing agencies' guidance for each possible case as they arise.

TOILET TRAINING

The NCCECE does not require students to be toilet trained upon entering our 2's or 3's programs. However, we ask for you to participate by actively encouraging bathroom independence! If your child is enrolled in our 3's program, we will ask that your child begin engaging in the toilet training process by February. We do understand and respect that toilet training is an individual developmental process for each student. We are your partners in this process. At the NCCECE, we teach students how to use the bathroom without a teacher's assistance. That being said, we are here to support them should they need help while cleaning, clothing, and washing their hands.

If you would like the teacher to assist your toilet trained child with cleaning, you must put in writing your desire for the staff to help your child in the bathroom. This written consent will be kept on file.

Accident protocol for our Shalom Chai, Garinim, and Shorashim classes is as follows:

- Toilet training is an individual journey. Children are ready to toilet train at different ages and that is okay. We believe it is important to listen to the child's body and introduce toilet training when the child is developmentally ready.
- When you and your child are ready to begin toilet training, please reach out to your teacher to notify them.
- Our teachers will review your plan and discuss how training will be phased into the classroom setting.
- **In order for your child to come to school in underwear, your child must:**
 - Successfully use the regular flushing toilet at home for both pee and poop
 - Successfully verbalize when they have to go
 - Be willing to sit on the toilet to try to go
- **Accidents will happen!**
 - 1st and 2nd pee accident or the 1st poop accident of the day, the teacher will clean the child and change their clothing following all bathroom guidelines. The teacher will call home to notify the parents.
 - 3rd pee accident or 2nd poop accident of the day, the teacher will clean the child and change their clothing following all bathroom guidelines. **The child will need to wear a pull-up/ diaper for the remainder of the day.**
- **If there are multiple days of accidents, it is at the discretion of the directors to re-evaluate the child's toilet training plan at the school. The school may require the child to be in pull-ups until further progress is shown in order to re-introduce underwear.**

Accident protocol for our Prachim (4's) class is as follows:

- **Students must be toilet trained in order to enter the Prachim program.**
- 1st and 2nd accident of the week, the teacher will clean and change the child's clothing following all bathroom guidelines. A phone call to the parents will be made to notify them.
- 3rd accident (and any other subsequent) of the week OR a 2nd accident in the same day, the teacher will clean the child and change their clothing following all bathroom guidelines. **A parent must come pick up their child from school.**

- **If there are recurring accidents or a pattern of incidents, the directors may request a parent meeting to address concerns and create a plan to move forward.**

HANDWASHING

Hand washing with a soap and water solution will continue for both Children and Staff at the following times:

- Upon arrival at school.
- Before and after eating or handling food or feeding children.
- After using the bathroom or helping a child use the bathroom
- Before leaving for the day.
- After blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing into tissue.
- When hands are visibly soiled.
- Before and after diapering a child.
- After using the bathroom or after helping a child use the bathroom.
- After having contact with body fluids.
- After handling trash.

The safety of our NCCECE community is our number one priority. Together, we can have a warm, engaging, educational, and safe school year.

The Noreen Cook Center for Early Childhood Education staff is excited to welcome you and your family into the school for another year of growth, learning, and fun. We look forward to being your partner in your child's educational journey. Thank you for your support!

**Let's have an amazing
2024-2025 School year!**