

בס"ד

THE TORAH DAY SCHOOL **Parent & Student Handbook**

2018 - 2019

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TORAH DAY SCHOOL OF HOUSTON

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Under the Auspices of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch

A Beneficiary of the Jewish Federation of Houston

An affiliate of the United Jewish Campaign

Accredited by TAAPS – Texas Alliance of Accredited Public Schools

DAY SCHOOL PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

A copy of the Minimum standards and Torah Day School's most recent Licensing Inspection Report are available for your review during regular school hours in the front office. Licensing Office: 713-940-3009 Website Address: www.dfps.state.tx.us/childcase Parents can report abuse or neglect by calling the Abuse Hot Line: 1-800-252-5400 Torah Day School is a gang-free zone! We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, color, sex, age, or disability. It is our intention that all qualified applications be given equal opportunity and that admission decisions are based in the best interest for the child. This booklet is designed to communicate the policies necessary to make our school a safe, healthy and productive learning environment. Torah Day School's education methods encourage students to become independent, responsible, resourceful, and creative individuals. The role and function of the staff is to maximize the possibilities for successful learning by providing a stimulating, nurturing and environment, combined with individual guidance and support.

Torah Day School is a gang-free zone.

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Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to another exciting school year!

The following is an important list of school regulations which will help in providing an excellent learning environment and foster the overall development of our students. We are concerned for the students' safety, health and general decorum, as well as academic achievement. While rules and regulations are at times cumbersome and difficult to adhere to, they are necessary for the orderly functioning of the school.

While we will do all we can to assure a successful and educationally productive year, we appreciate your support and cooperation in developing the positive attitudes needed to maximize the potential of our children. Please review the procedures outlined with your children, so that they are fully aware of school expectations.

In recognition of parents being our partners in our neighborhood school; please note that the policies in our family handbook is a work in progress and we are receptive to ideas as to how we could change or improve our policies.

We look forward to working with you to ensure a rewarding school experience.

TDS Administrators

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Torah Day School is to provide and promote the highest quality Judaic and general education to a diverse [community](#) of Jewish children. Our aim is to motivate students to reach personal excellence, and to be conscientious members of society. Within a warm nurturing environment, our focus is to inspire a love for learning, develop academic and social skills, and foster responsibility in each individual.

A well-balanced education will foster a commitment to using [Torah values](#) as a guide to the decisions of life, community, and life-long learning and teaching.

OUR FACULTY

Our facility is staffed by professionals who are sensitive to the needs of children and families and is committed to high quality Jewish and secular education. Teachers regularly attend educational workshops and professional development sessions, receiving a minimum of 30 hours of professional development each year as well as CPR and Pediatric First Aid training.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parents will be notified in writing of any changes to operational policies or the enrollment agreement. A copy of the updated operational policies must be signed and dated by each family.

ACCREDITATION/LICENSING

Torah Day School is accredited by [Texas Alliance of Accredited Private Schools](#) (TAAPS) and licensed through the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services (TDFPS). Additional accreditation for Torah Day School of Houston is provided by the [National Accreditation Board of Merkos](#) - Central Organization for Jewish Education, based in NY. Theirs is the benchmark of a Jewish Day School's limudei kodesh and general academic studies programming. Individuals requiring further information about either of these two accrediting bodies are encouraged to contact them directly.

Additionally, Torah Day School is an affiliate of [The Jewish Federation of Greater Houston](#) and a beneficiary of the United Jewish Campaign.

Families may review a copy of TDFPS Minimum Standard Rules and the most recent licensing inspection report upon request. Parents may contact the local licensing office at 713.940.3009, child abuse hotline at 1.800.252.5400, and TDFPS website at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, OR WORK CHANGES

Any changes in address, telephone number, work location, e-mail address, or emergency contact information must be reported promptly to the school office. Changes must be initialed and dated by the parent.

ABSENCES & LATE ARRIVALS

The school calendar will help you plan your vacations and appointments so they will not interfere with school.

If a student has been absent from school for five days or more a doctor's note must be presented to the office to be readmitted. This is of particular importance in case of a contagious disease. For any illness a student needs to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Students who anticipate being absent from school for an extended period of time for reasons other than illness are expected to make up all work and take all tests. Students who are absent due to illness need to consult with their teachers regarding missed work.

Scheduling medical and personal appointments during school hours is discouraged. If this is unavoidable, send a note with the student to the office.

When parents plan to be out of town, please notify the school in advance and include who will be in charge of the home, carpool changes, and a telephone number where parents can be reached in case of an emergency.

All students arriving to school late or leaving early must check in and out through the school office.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

We strive for arrival and departure time to be a pleasant transition for you and your child. Teachers are eager to help with this and will assist you in the transition. In some cases, it is not clear when assistance is needed so please let the teacher know if help is required.

Do not leave children unattended in a parked car, and do not leave the car idling when you are picking up your child. Do not leave purses or other valuables in your car where they are visible.

Do not leave car in loading zone and enter building.

Arrival and departure can be hectic, confusing times for parents, children, and teachers. Although communication is very important, we ask that parents refrain from lengthy conversations with teachers and understand when teachers need to end a conversation in order to tend to and supervise the children. Extended discussions between parent and teachers should be reserved for telephone contact, parent-teacher conference, or at a scheduled time when the teacher is not responsible for the supervision of children.

The policy for release of children is as follows:

1. A child is released only to a parent or an adult designated in writing by the parent (on emergency card or letter written by parent).
2. If you authorize an individual not listed on your emergency card to pick up your child, please email the name and contact information for that person to info@tdshouston.org.

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3. If a person authorized to pick up a child is unknown to the staff, the staff will require the picture identification on the person's driver's license and will record the license number.
4. If a parent calls to authorize the emergency release of a child when note or fax is not possible, we will verify that the caller is actually the parent.
Please be on time to pick up your child at his/her scheduled departure time. Children become anxious and worried when they are not picked up promptly. All safety belts must be functioning. Please be sure to check safety belts before picking up your child. A child will not be placed in a car unless a working safety belt is available.

Turn your engine off while assisting your child in and out of the vehicle. There is **no parking** or **passing** permitted in the car pool lane.

Early Dismissal on Half Days

Kindergarten: 11:45 a.m.

First – Eighth Grade: 12:00 pm

Arrival and Departure Times

K – 2nd Grade 8:40 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.

3rd – 8th Grade 8:00 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.

Aftercare for Kindergarten

2:15p.m.–3:40p.m.

ARRIVAL

Enter the parking lot at the “Entrance” sign only. Drive your car in the car pool lane toward the exit, stopping behind the car in front. Upon reaching the loading area, turn off your engine. A teacher will assist your child from the car. Please do not leave your car to escort your child.

Students need to arrive to school on time.

The school does not provide supervision for students prior to 8:00 A.M. Please do not leave students unattended on the school grounds.

DISMISSAL

Please pick up your child promptly at the end of the school day. This will enable teachers to clean up and prepare for the next class.

If someone other than yourself will be picking your child up on a given day, please give written notice, dated and signed by you, stating the name of the individual you are authorizing to pick up your child. No child will be dismissed to an individual not authorized to pick him/her up.

BACKPACKS

The only items allowed in school are supplies listed on the supply list and other items requested by a teacher. Please do not allow your child to bring hockey sticks, large sports equipment, electronic games, or toy guns to school, since these kinds of play things are extremely distracting and can cause accidents during school time.

BICYCLES & ROLLER BLADES

Students are not permitted to roller blade to school. Bicycles are only permitted to be parked in the bike rack outside the building.

Students leave their bikes at their own risk. TDS cannot take responsibility for bikes or any other equipment brought to school. Please note: All children are required to wear helmets by state law.

CELEBRATION OF BIRTHDAYS

Birthday parties for students in First through Eighth grade will not be celebrated in school. Party invitations can only be distributed if all students in the class are invited.

CELL PHONES

To promote effective communication between families and our program staff as well as to enhance your interaction with your child, cell phone use is not allowed in the hallways, classrooms, or playgrounds. Use of cell phones while driving in the TDS parking lot is prohibited.

COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Torah Day School is committed to the safety of students, teachers, and administrators. In this pursuit, measures will be taken to ensure a safe environment. Parents, students, and teachers are encouraged to notify the administration of any situation that poses or may pose a safety threat. Upon notification the safety concern will be handled promptly.

While we feel that everyone is secure in the school environment, we know that you will understand our desire to be cautious at all times.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the home and school provides a better understanding of each child's needs, and development, and ensures success for every child. We will make every effort to communicate effectively and regularly with you about your child and school information. We are counting on you to stay informed by checking your emails from our school, checking reading the weekly Thursday Thunder, and emails from the teachers.

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COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL

We will utilize the email system to communicate with you to keep you informed about program information, such as school events, illnesses, volunteer opportunities, and information about the curriculum, and nutrition. You will receive updates from us regularly.

Although teachers may send emails to you about class information, please do not expect them to reply to questions through email. Please communicate with them directly or by phone.

MESSAGES FROM HOME

All important messages (a change in schedule, a different person picking up your child, child going with a friend, etc.) must be in writing, dated, and signed.

FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES

A “meet and greet” is scheduled at the beginning of the year for you to become better acquainted with your child’s teacher. Conferences with the teacher will be scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss your child’s progress. Teachers are willing to schedule additional conferences upon request.

The school and its employees maintain confidentiality of information. Staff members do not conference informally or at social events. Teachers are discouraged from speaking about your child at carpool. To enable teachers to have all needed information, please set up a specified time to confer in person or on the phone by contacting the teachers only through the office or through their TDS email.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Please check the calendar for the back to school night information.

CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a necessary developmental process with the ultimate goal being responsible and self-disciplined students. Torah Day School’s policy encourages students to maintain a high standard of behavior. Each teacher has his or her own classroom guidelines, which are communicated to parents and students at the start of each year. Any issues during the school year will be communicated to parents and students. When acceptable behavior is disregarded, one or more of the following steps will be taken:

- Conference between the student and teacher
- Student reported to the principal
- Conference between the principal and student
- Conference with student, parent, teacher and principal

Inappropriate behavior that automatically calls for parent conference and may result in immediate suspension:

- Bullying
- Cheating

- Use of vulgar or offensive language
- Malicious destruction of school property
- Participating in illegal activities
- Leaving a classroom without permission
- Skipping Class
- Violence towards self or others

Actions that may lead to expulsion include:

- Patterns of behavior that are a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the student and others.
- Continued failure to comply with the school discipline code, theft of school or personal property, vandalism, physical assault.

Students are expected to adhere to the following rules:

- Treat all teachers, staff, other students and guests with respect
- Take care of school and personal property
- Avoid fighting and use of inappropriate language or gestures
- Participate respectfully during davening and other gatherings
- Walk quietly in the hallways, enter classrooms promptly, courteously and quietly
- Work quietly in class
- Play fairly and safely on the playground, share equipment
- Use proper table manners and soft, indoor voices in the lunchroom
- Be ready for pick-up during carpool

DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS

Proper dress is an important behavior expected of Torah Day School students. Please send your students properly attired to ensure that teachers spend their time on teaching and not on monitoring the dress code.

- Uniforms must be properly worn throughout the day.
- Uniforms are available at a variety of stores in Houston and through catalogs.
- Uniform garments need to be in good condition i.e. no tears, patches or badly stained.
- Only a white under shirt is allowed under the school uniform blouses and shirts.
- Students may only wear the navy blue TDS regulation sweatshirt (purchased from Land's End**) or Tzivos Ha-Shem sweatshirt in school or on school grounds and field trips.
- All students must wear appropriate shoes and socks (over the ankle) that allow them to participate safely in all activities. Open-toed sandals, slippers, mules, crocs and plastic shoes are not permitted.
- If a student is not dressed in proper uniform garments, parents will be called to bring proper attire to school in order for the student to remain in class.
- TDS is a make-up, nail polish and dangling earring free environment. No exceptions will be made!

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- Parents and students will be notified of dress code exceptions/modifications for specific events.
- Extremes of dress, including hairstyles and jewelry, will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Boys' uniforms in grades K-8:

- Navy blue dress pants
- Light blue or white oxford cloth button down shirt
- White or light blue mesh golf shirt-no pockets or logo
- TDS regulation sweat shirt**
- Yarmulke (Kipah) and Arba Kanfot (Tzitzis)
- Green TDS T-shirts for field trips

Girls' uniforms in grades K-4:

- Navy blue pleated skirt
- Light blue or white oxford cloth button down shirts (may be long or short sleeve)
- Light blue or white mesh golf/ polo shirt (long or short sleeve)-no pockets or logo
- TDS regulation sweat shirt**
- Green TDS T-shirts for field trips

Girls' uniforms in grades 5-8:

- Navy pleated or TDS plaid pleated skirt-below the knee or longer
- White or light blue oxford cloth button down blouse
- Long sleeved knit/polo shirt (no logo) *
- TDS regulation sweat shirt**
- Knee high socks or tights (no leggings or footless tights)
- Only white undershirts are allowed
- Green TDS T-shirts for field trips

** The navy blue zippered sweat shirt with the TDS logo is required of all students. This needs to be purchased through Land's End. Call Land's End directly for purchase. You will need the following information when calling:

Land's End phone # 1-800-469-2222

TDS School Code – 900-91554

Logo # - 0352296K

Item # - 745144U7

*** Shirts must not be close fitting and must be buttoned to cover the collarbone. Sleeves must cover the elbow at all times.**

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is important that parents supply the school with their daytime telephone numbers and the telephone numbers of relatives or friends authorized to act for the parents (in case the parents cannot be reached). If emergency numbers change during the year, notify the school, so our records can be updated.

In the event of an emergency, the following procedure will occur:

- An attempt will be made to notify the parent.
- If the parents cannot be reached, an attempt will be made to notify the emergency contact.

- If the emergency contact cannot be reached, an attempt will be made to communicate with the child's physician.
- Depending on the severity of the emergency, the child may be taken to the emergency room, specified in your medical report, for treatment or 911 may be called.

The school has staff members who have been trained in first-aid and CPR.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Our program conducts fire drills monthly, severe weather drills quarterly. If an evacuation is ordered by the local fire or police department, the TDS reserves the right to follow the evacuation and transportation orders to the emergency location determined by the authorities. Parents will be notified of the location.

In the event the Center must be evacuated due to the threat of fire, bomb scare, or other building emergency, children will be evacuated through the nearest exit and will be escorted to a safe distance from the building. Children will remain outside until the fire/police department informs us that it is safe to reenter. Parents will be notified about all evacuations.

EVACUATION PLAN

In the event that the school building needs to be evacuated the staff will walk all children down Portal to Milne Elementary School located at 7800 Portal Drive, phone 713-778-3420. Each lead teacher is required to carry an emergency folder at all times with pertinent information for every child in their care. The folder also has attendance sheets to keep records of each child that has checked in daily. Once the children have been safely relocated the staff will contact parents and emergency contacts accordingly.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The decision about closing the school for inclement weather will be based upon the closings of the schools in the area and the weather conditions. You will be notified via e-mail and a text message to the cell phone number on record.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

Family involvement is essential to the success of our program. Families are encouraged to take an active role by sharing your ideas, energy, and support. You are given opportunities during the year to volunteer in a variety of ways such as: being a Room Parent, assisting with special events, making learning games for classrooms, assisting in classrooms, helping with fundraising projects, PTO, etc. Your willingness to help will enhance the quality of our program. Each family is encouraged to volunteer at least 10 hours each year. We strongly urge you to fulfill this golden opportunity for a mitzvah.

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PARENTAL INPUT

Parents are given the opportunity to provide their input regarding your child's interests, strengths, and emerging abilities at the beginning of each year on the Family Information Form. Additionally, parent input is encouraged throughout the year. Input from parents is combined with information obtained from the assessment portfolios to guide the teachers in planning activities to meet the individual developmental needs and interests of your child and to determine the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

ROOM PARENTS

Room Parents play an important role in helping in the classroom. Some responsibilities include: communicating with parents about upcoming classroom events, organizing sign-up sheets for classroom parties and volunteering in the classroom and getting others to volunteer as needed.

Parents are asked to sign up to volunteer to help teachers coordinate special activities such as holiday parties, cooking projects, and special events, as well as obtaining volunteers as needed.

REFERRAL/COMMUNITY RESOURCES

We maintain a current list of child and family support services available in the community (e.g., mental health, behavioral issues, nutrition, parenting programs, early intervention-special education screening and assessment services). Upon request, we share the list with you and assist you in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support your child's and your family's well-being and development. The Jewish Family Services is a valuable resource to our program.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips complement the school curriculum and will be taken periodically during the year by each grade. These trips are always undertaken for educational and/or religious reasons. Teachers, as well as volunteer parents, accompany the classes or groups on these trips.

There is a permission clause on the school registration form for parents to sign which enable students to go on field trips throughout the year. An emergency health form is also completed that will be taken on each trip. Field trip forms will be sent home with students prior to the trip to inform parents of the specifics.

In cases where parents have a concern about a trip destination, timing, or related item, parents are urged to contact the school office immediately. The student needs a signed permission slip for the field trip and a "0" student balance in order to go on a field trip, otherwise the student may come to school and do assigned work on the day of the event.

HOMEWORK & MAKE-UP WORK

Homework is an integral part of the school curriculum, assigned to reinforce skills that are taught in the school. Homework also gives students the responsibility to take work home, complete it, and return it to school for feedback.

For children who are ill but able to complete homework, a classmate or sibling should be asked to bring home the necessary materials and assignments. Any questions about homework should be addressed to the teacher. When your student is absent, please call the school office by 9:00 a.m. to request his/her homework and to mention who will be picking it up. With sufficient notice, the office will attempt to gather all homework assignments from the appropriate teachers. The following are helpful hints for ensuring student success with homework:

- Have a regular place, with plenty of light, for the student to complete homework.
- Determine set times for homework and consider the rule “no privileges until homework is completed”
- Provide a short break and a snack before homework.
- During homework time keep distractions to a minimum.
- Before the student begins, talk with him/her about the assignments. Help plan how the homework time will be used.
- Allow the student 5-minute breaks every 20-30 minutes.
- Praise the student for completed tasks and effort.
- Each night, have your child put all items being brought to school the next day in a specific place. This helps students stay organized.

HONOR ROLL

Each marking period students meeting the following criteria will be named to the Honor Roll.

Grades 1-5: Honors - Grade average of 90 – 96.9.
High Honors - Grade average 97 and above

Grades 6-8: Honors - GPA 3.7-3.89
High Honors - GPA 3.9 and above

In addition, good attendance and the approval of all teachers is required for students in all grades to attain honors.

Students who make the honor roll will receive a certificate at the following Rosh Chodesh Assembly

HEALTH AND SAFETY

One of the most serious challenges facing group care for young children is preventing illness. The staff strives to maintain the highest standard of cleanliness. Proper hand washing procedures are followed and taught to the children. Toys that are mouthed, eating surfaces, and diaper equipment will be sanitized between children’s use. One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of ill children. We need your help for this. Do not bring ill children to school. If your child becomes ill, you will be contacted immediately. You are expected to pick him/her up within the hour. If an illness prevents your child from participating comfortably in activities or creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, then the child will be made

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comfortable until you pick him or her up. If possible, the child will be located where new individuals will not be exposed.

Please notify the school if your child has contracted a contagious disease such as “pink eye,” head lice, ringworm, chicken pox, etc. You will be notified by e-mail (Health Alert) of the presence of a diagnosed contagious illness in your child’s classroom or suite, such as conjunctivitis, Parvovirus B 19 (5th disease) and others as recommended by the Texas Department of Health.

Our health policy stipulates that a child is to be kept home if any of the following apply:

- If s/he has a fever over 100 degrees or has had one during the previous 24 hours
- If s/he has symptoms of a possible communicable disease which include red and/or runny eyes, sore throat, abdominal pain, or vomiting.
- If s/he has diarrhea, due to any cause
 - If s/he has a runny nose (one that requires wiping at least every 10 minutes and/or has a colored discharge).

Please notify the school if your child has any communicable illness (measles, chicken pox, lice, etc.)

Since teachers go outside with their classes, we cannot keep one child inside during outdoor playtime. Please keep your child at home if s/he is not well enough for outdoor play.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be notified so that you can make necessary arrangements for him/her to be picked up. It is most important that parents provide the school with the telephone numbers where they can be reached while their child is at school.

A child may return to school if fever free and/or on antibiotics for 24 hours (as prescribed by the doctor).

ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCIES

Accidents/First Aid: Teachers are certified in Pediatric First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Should emergency action be needed, staff will provide immediate care; call EMS, and call the parent and the child’s physician.

Staff will attempt to contact you when your child receives any injury that requires more than “TLC” and a band aid so you will be aware of the incident. A written report will be completed and signed by the supervising teacher and the director reporting the nature of the accident as well as the first aid given. If the injury requires medical attention by a health care professional, your signature will be required on the report within 48 hours of the incident.

In the case of a minor injury (minor cuts, scrapes, bumps, or bruises), trained school personnel will apply first-aid. Teachers will fill out an accident form reporting the nature of the accident and care that was given. You will be contacted immediately or after school depending on the severity of the injury.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication, deliver the medication directly to the teacher, along with a completed medication form (which may be obtained from the front office). To insure the safety of all children, never put medication in your child's bag or lunch box. Medication may not be placed in a bottle or cup to be given at school.

In order for our staff to administer medication, both written permission from the parent/legal guardian AND the licensed health provider for prescription AND over the counter (OTC) medication must be provided. Upon enrollment, you are welcome to have your licensed health care professional complete a non-prescription medication form to indicate which OTC medications and the appropriate dose that may be given to your child.

OTC medication will be administered only if it is in the original container and will be administered only according to label directions. When the label states "children under 2 (or 6) years, consult a physician," the proper dose of the medication must be indicated in writing by your child's licensed health provider. OTC medication must be labeled with your child's first and last name.

If your child requires individualized medical attention such as a nebulizer treatment for asthma, a daily on-going medication, or other special treatments, you must provide the program with a **written individualized medical action plan** from the prescribing **healthcare provider**. Additionally, you must meet with the Director and your child's teacher to discuss the medical action plan. **Our program may not be able to accommodate children with certain medical conditions.**

The school does not administer unauthorized medications for students.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS/MEDICAL RECORDS

Within the first week after your child begins the program, and as age-appropriate thereafter, the following information is required:

- Health records must document the dates of services to show that your child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/2/385.full>)
- A signed statement from a licensed health care professional who has examined your child within the past year, indicating your child is able to take part in the school program. Results of health examinations must show up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results.
- If your child is overdue for any routine health services, you must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition for remaining enrolled in the program.
- In the case which your child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) your child will be excluded promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in our program.
- We will only accept medical waivers for immunization.

LEAVING THE PREMISES

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Students will not be permitted to leave the premises during school hours unless the school obtains written permission from a parent or guardian. For safety reasons, the school will not permit any unauthorized person to pick up a student from school without written permission from a parent or guardian.

If a student must withdraw from school before the end of the school day, a parent must come into the school office to sign the withdrawal log. Students who are picked up early must remain in the classroom and wait to be called down to the lobby.

MANDATED DFPS POSTINGS

ANTI-VIOLENCE POLICY

In an effort to reduce violent or aggressive play, toys, clothing, and paraphernalia that instigate aggressive play may not be sent or worn to school. These items include, but are not limited to: toy weapons and war figures. Please use your best judgment when dressing children and purchasing lunch boxes and backpacks.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The following information concerning child abuse and neglect is provided for your review. We are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The program is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse or neglect. You will be notified if your child is questioned as part of the investigation.

There are three kinds of child abuse:

1. Physical abuse - inflicting bodily injury on a child (beating, burning, etc.)
2. Sexual abuse - using a child in or exposing her/him to sexual activities, with or without the child's consent
3. Emotional abuse - demanding that the child do more than he/she is able to do, severely criticizing or humiliating her/him for not living up to a demand, or placing upon the child such unclear requirements that the child cannot understand what he/she is supposed to do.

There are at least two kinds of child neglect:

1. Physical neglect - failure to provide sufficient food, clothing, shelter, or medical care; failure to provide adequate education, guidance or supervision
2. Emotional neglect - failure to give a child the love and affection he/she needs

PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

We take confidentiality seriously at TDS and all staff and board members abide by the regulations specified in

§746.601 by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (Child Care Licensing). A copy of the document can be obtained from the school office. We will not only make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your child and family but also the confidentiality of every other child, family, and staff member of TDS.

Confidential files, including enrollment, medical, and incident forms, and other records of each child, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the main office. Parents must grant written

authorization for files to be reviewed by TDS staff, representatives from licensing, and the health department. In addition, permission must be granted on the Permission to Access Files Form to other individuals, such as therapists or other specialists, who may have access to your child's files. A copy of this authorization is kept inside the child's individual file.

Each child's current ongoing Assessment Portfolio consisting of work samples, anecdotal observations, notes, developmental screenings, and/or checklists will be kept locked in the child's current classroom.

At times, other schools, therapists, and/or other professionals may request information about your child as part of an enrollment process or while providing care for your child/family. Such information will only be provided with additional written permission from the parent or guardian.

MESSAGES & TELEPHONE

Torah Day School will not deliver messages to students except in an emergency. Please give your student all necessary instructions for the day before he/she arrives at school.

- Students are not permitted in the teacher's lounge without permission from the office.
- Students are responsible for bringing lunches and homework and/or materials to school. Parents will not be contacted during the day for these items.
- Students need to make after school arrangements before coming to school. They will not be allowed to call home at the end of the day to change plans.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

Please notify the School Office if your child is not coming to school for any reason. There are no make-ups for absences.

NUTRITION POLICIES

SNACKS/LUNCHES

Nutrition education is an important aspect of our program. Our goals are to increase the children's acceptance of a wide variety of foods and to promote good eating habits for optimal development. Good eating habits are formed early in life. With proper direction and continued reinforcement at home, children learn that eating nutritiously leads to a healthy, happy lifestyle.

All meals served to your child will be brought to school by you. We do not prepare and serve food.

What to avoid bringing (because they are high in sugar, fat, and/or additives):

- Fruit snacks, fruit roll ups —Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Taste great, but they're not really fruit and contain lots of added sugar. These foods are convenient but lack nutritional value and are high in fat, sugar and additives.
- Flavored milk (chocolate, strawberry, vanilla)
Milk is great, but the flavors are just added sugar.
- Sugar-coated cereals

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If there is a cartoon character on the box, it's probably unhealthy.

- Sweets: candy, cookies, cake and snack cakes, pastries, or chocolate spreads.
- Soda, Kool Aid, sports drinks, etc.

Water and milk are the best beverages for your growing child.

Along with a well-balanced meal, if you want to send a “treat” (that is low in sugar and/or fat), try one of the following:

- Vanilla wafers
- Graham crackers
- Animal crackers
- Fruit-flavored yogurt
- Flavored rice cakes
- Dehydrated fruits (banana chips, apple chips, peach chips, dried apricots)
- Baked chips such as baked potato chips, baked Sun chips, baked pita chips, or baked veggie chips
- Pudding cup
- Fruit snack made with 100% real fruit such as Fruit leather
- Granola bar (without icing, coating, or drizzle)

The school encourages a “nut free” environment. Please be careful and do not send any foods that contain nuts or have “traces of nuts” in the ingredients; if found, it will be discarded.

Nutritious lunches are important for the efficient functioning of your child's body and intellect. Please carefully select his/her foods and avoid “junk” food. The following are suggestions of nutritious foods: Bagels/cream cheese, fruit salad, tuna salad, egg salad, pasta salad, fresh salad, lettuce/tomatoes, hummus, all fruits and vegetables, water for drinking, raisins, cheese and crackers, cheese sandwich, dried fruit chips, fish, cottage cheese, rice cakes, pita bread.

Students should bring their own pareve or dairy lunch, drink and snack. Students may not share food.

STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

With your permission, the food allergy information will be posted in the classroom.

As required by the licensing standards of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children requiring dietary considerations (such as food allergies) must have a written statement from the child's physician or a registered dietitian stating which foods that must be avoided and suggesting alternatives. The staff will post the food allergy/sensitivity, nutritional needs, or other medical needs of the child for all staff caring for the child to review only if written permission to do so has been given by the parent. With severe food allergies, such as that to peanuts, a letter to all families in that room will be sent out to advise them of the severe allergy and to ask for them to take it into consideration when preparing their own child's snacks and lunches.

STUDENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Students with special feeding needs will be handled on an individual basis as the family and program develop an appropriate plan.

If your child has any dietary requirements, which are not medical by nature, such a vegetarian or vegan, please discuss your preference with the Director and your child's teachers to establish a plan of action.

PEANUT/TREE NUT-FREE SCHOOL POLICY

TDS strives to be a nut-free zone.

Please do NOT send any of the following to school:

- Peanut butter or any other nut butter.
- Crackers with peanut butter filling
- Any muesli bar, biscuit or other product that list nuts as an ingredient
- Trail mixes with nuts, granola bars with nuts, or dried fruit with nuts
- Cereal with nuts
- Nuts in salad
- Candy or cookies containing nuts
- Loose nuts of any kind (peanuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts, mixed nuts, coconut, pecans, pistachios, etc.)
- Anything cooked in peanut oil that has been cold pressed, expelled or extruded
- All nut pastes (EG: Almond paste)
- All nut extracts (EG: Almond extract – used in making various cookies)

Please make sure that you always check the labels on the food you are sending in to school. The FDA requires all manufacturers to list on their label if peanuts and/or tree nuts are in their product. If it says peanuts/tree nuts are contained in the food, consider it a banned item. Remember – manufacturing processes change, so a food that was safe, may not continue to be. It's still important to read the ingredient label each time you purchase a food.

Food labels that say: *"May contain or contain peanut or tree nuts"* are NOT OK to bring to school to eat.

Food labels that say: *"Processed in a facility that also processes peanuts & nuts"* are OK to bring to school for personal consumption.

PARENT CUSTODY ISSUES

We require documentation regarding which parent has legal custody in the case of separation or divorce. If there is no legal documentation, then both parents have the right of access to TDS records and pick-up of their children. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide legal documentation verifying custody arrangements. Custodial parents are responsible for notifying the TDS, in writing, of any special circumstances with regard to the rights and obligations of the non-

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custodial parent. This includes providing written permission for the non-custodial parent to pick up a child on a regular basis or for a special occasion. Any court orders affecting the care or pick-up of the student must be submitted to the school office with the relevant areas highlighted. In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

PERSONAL ITEMS FROM HOME

Children may bring from home personal items that are necessary for their security during special times of the day such as separation from parent and naptime. They will be asked to keep such items in their cubby when not necessary for their security.

Please leave toys at home. It is difficult to share favorite toys and sad when they are broken or lost. However, we encourage children to bring books, pictures, or other items that have educational value, especially those things related to the current theme. Candy, gum, toy weapons and any toys that promote violence are not allowed at school at any time.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The TDS Preschool reserves the right to take photographs of classrooms and students for educational, promotional, and fundraising purposes.

PROMOTION

Students will **be promoted on the basis of academic achievement**. Students must pass all academic subjects with a 65% average or better for the year.

- Failure to pass one class results in the necessity of completing remedial work.
- Failure to pass two classes may result in retention.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued three times per year (every twelve weeks). Report cards are sent home to keep. No signature is necessary.

A mid-third progress report will be issued to parents between report card periods. If parents have a question regarding their student's report card or general progress, contact the teacher(s) through the school office or by e-mail.

SAFETY/SECURITY/ACCESS

The safety and security of children is our top priority. All doors remain locked. Only individuals with children in our program, prospective parents, and special visitors are allowed admittance to our department. Visitors must sign in and out and wear a visitor badge. Unknown individuals will be asked to show picture identification and to state the purpose of their visit before gaining admittance.

Surveillance cameras outside are provided to monitor the doors and the facility.

Additionally, drugs, firearms, weapons, and other items deemed dangerous are not permitted on the premises at any time.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

TDS recognizes that any child at any time may have “special needs” due to family emergencies, divorce/separation, moving, illness, allergies, etc. The program requests that parents keep the classroom teachers and/or Director informed of any situations that may be upsetting to the child or causing disruption in the child’s regular routine or typical behavior. The program welcomes the input and suggestions of families in such instances to help us better meet the needs of your child and family. Conferences with the Director and/or classroom teachers can be also arranged as needed throughout the school year.

The teacher and Director will make recommendations for appropriate professional referrals to you if your child requires further screening for possible developmental delays, challenging behaviors, or if other concerns arise. Costs of specialized consultants are the responsibility of the family.

Families are expected to complete medical alert forms annually for severe allergies and other medical conditions that require close monitoring by staff, which include instructions for any of the child’s special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g. asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes).

Specialized consultants, including speech, occupational, and physical therapists and other professionals as needed, are welcome to arrange with the Director to observe the child while at the program and to use a classroom or meeting room to provide therapy for the child on site at TDS only with written parental permission and payment made directly to the therapist by the child’s parents. The therapist must sign the child out for therapy and sign back in to the classroom after therapy sessions. Therapists or specialized consultants may obtain information from the teacher about the child and/or review the child’s assessment portfolio only with parental permission. In addition, teachers and/or the Director will meet with the parent and therapist to determine the needs of the child while in our care. The TDS staff welcomes the input of specialized consultants in helping us meet the special needs of a child under our care. The Director has contact information for several Houston agencies, consultants and therapists that the center has worked with in the past as well as others that can provide support services for children with special needs.

TDS attempts to be inclusive of all children by adding more staff training, and/or modifying the physical environment within reasonable limits. The reasonableness of the adjustments needed for the specialized needs of the individual child in addition to meeting the needs of all the children enrolled will be considered seriously by the Director. Should accommodations be made to include a child with special needs, parents will be responsible for additional costs beyond those included in the school’s tuition such as a shadow or additional staff person. TDS may be unable to accommodate the special needs of all children.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Our program will schedule special activities and events throughout the year. Some of the special activities/events include: Grandparents’ Day, community visitors, holiday stations, Chanukah party and Purim carnival.

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SPEECH/HEARING/VISION SCREENING

All children who turn four years of age by September of each school year are required by the State Health Department to have a hearing and vision screening by a licensed physician, qualified professional or certified screener. A record of the screening must be turned into the front office.

Screenings for preschool and pre-kindergarten programs are conducted in the fall by trained specialists. This evaluation screening is included in your registration fee. The information is compiled and distributed to you as soon as possible. When a follow-up is indicated, a meeting can be scheduled between the specialists, preschool staff and parents to review findings and discuss appropriate action. The screening results merely indicate that an area of development is on age-appropriate skill level, requires future monitoring and/or a more thorough evaluation. For the children who require professional guidance in reaching the age-appropriate skill level, we will provide space for specialists to meet with your child. Should professional guidance be required, the child's parents are financially responsible for the additional services and should contract directly with the specialist.

SMOKING

Smoking outside and within the TDS building is prohibited at all times.

SPORTS TEAMS

Participation on a sports team is a privilege. Students must have a C- average in all classes to try out for a team and must maintain that average throughout the season to remain on the team. If a student's average drops, s/he will receive a warning and will have 2 weeks to bring their average back up to a C- level. If, after 2 weeks, the student does not bring up his/her average s/he will be removed from the team. After removal from the team, the student will have 1 chance to bring his/her average up and be reinstated to the team. If the average should fall below a C- a second time, the student will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season. Students with an IEP will be considered on a case by case basis.

STAFF TRAINING

In addition to regular in-service training sessions, Torah Day School staff will have at least one clock hour of annual training focused on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including: (1) Factors indicating a child at risk; (2) Warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect; (3) Internal procedures for reporting cases of neglect and abuse; (4) Community organizations that have training programs available to childcare center staff members, children, and parents. Admins will meet weekly with staff to discuss curriculum assessments and documentation.

Parents can report abuse or neglect at any time by calling: 1-800-252-5400.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES

Students may bring and use notebooks, iPads, etc. **ONLY** when a teacher requires it and **ONLY** under that teacher's supervision. If the device is used under any other circumstances, it will be confiscated. If a parent requires a child to have a cell phone, it needs to remain in his/her backpack, turned off, during school hours.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

A family may be asked to leave the program for any of the following reasons:

- Determination that the program cannot meet the needs of the child or family
- Lack of cooperation between parent and administration/staff
- Inability of parents/guardians to adhere to TDS policies and or procedures
- Inability or unwillingness to adhere to payment plans

TESTS & ASSIGNMENTS

At the end of each school year, all students from kindergarten to eighth grade are given a standardized test. Results of the standardized test will be shared with parents during the summer by appointment.

Specific test dates for various subjects will be determined at the beginning of the school year and parents will be notified. This schedule applies to major tests only. Having specific test days for particular subjects helps students plan effectively for study time, hopefully, avoiding overload.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for the care of all books checked out to them. Each book must be covered.

- There may be a \$1.00/day fee for any book found without a cover.
- If a book is lost, the student must pay the cost in order to receive a replacement. If the original book is found, a partial amount will be refunded.
- Any torn, damaged or lost books will be deducted from the student's school balance.
- Students are encouraged to use our secular and Judaic libraries for checking books out for the home. A library book is also considered to be the child's responsibility. The cost of any lost or damaged library book will be charged to the student.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Set a reasonable and consistent bedtime.
- Allow sufficient time for breakfast so your child arrives at school feeling relaxed and not hungry.
- Please limit sugary foods.
- Help your child arrive at school on time.
- Inform the teacher if something is going on at home (illness of a family member, extended absence of a parent, etc.) that might affect your child.
- Inform the school when you will be away from home and your child will be in the care of another adult. This is important in the event of transportation problems or emergencies.

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Frequently, children are given information in the form of notes or memos to be taken home. Please check your child's lunchbox and/or backpack daily to ensure that you do not miss out on any important information. Some information is also sent home via e-mail. Please keep your e-mail address current with the school office and your child's teachers.

Effective communication is essential to your child's education. Feel free to contact the school about any matter. You are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with your child's teacher. If you have further questions or concerns, please discuss them with the Directors.

Please contact your child's teacher through the office with any questions, suggestions or concerns. Also all teachers are available through their TDS email account. Teachers will provide contact information at the beginning of the year. Teachers are open to your input.

TRANSCRIPTS

To order official transcripts please contact the office. Families are allowed one free transcript for pick up each year. For additional transcripts and for transcripts mailed the fee is \$10.00 per order. A student's balance must be "0" before any transcripts can be given.

VISITORS

Families of children enrolled at Torah Day School are welcome visitors at TDS at all times to observe, to eat lunch with your child, to volunteer to help in the classroom, or to share a special talent with the students.

All family members and friends must check in with the office and obtain a visitor badge when visiting the center.