

בס"ד

# THE TORAH DAY SCHOOL ECC Parent & Student Handbook

2020 - 2021

10900 Fondren Road  
Houston, Texas 77096  
School Office: (713) 777-2000  
Fax: (713) 776-0036  
Website: [www.tdshouston.org](http://www.tdshouston.org)  
Email: [info@tdshouston.org](mailto:info@tdshouston.org)



# TORAH DAY SCHOOL OF HOUSTON

10900 Fondren Road  
Houston, Texas 77096  
[www.tdshouston.org](http://www.tdshouston.org)

**Office: (713) 777-2000**

**Fax: (713) 776-0036**

[info@tdshouston.org](mailto:info@tdshouston.org)

**Executive Director: Rabbi S. Lazaroff**

**Director: Rebbetzin C. Lazaroff**

[clazaroff@tdshouston.org](mailto:clazaroff@tdshouston.org)

**Principal: Rabbi Enan Francis**

[efrancis@tdshouston.org](mailto:efrancis@tdshouston.org)

**Early Childhood Coordinator: Chaya Sara Kaufmann**

[ckaufmann@tdshouston.org](mailto:ckaufmann@tdshouston.org)

**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**

## ECC 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](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/childcase) Parents can report abuse or neglect by calling the Abuse Hot Line: 1-800-252-5400

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.

# ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to Parents .....	6
Mission Statement.....	7
Our Philosophy .....	7
Our Faculty .....	7
Goals and Outcomes for Children.....	8
Goals and Outcomes for Families.....	8
Our Curriculum Framework .....	8
Judaica.....	9
Our Approach to Learning .....	9
Our Approach to Creativity .....	10
Our Approach to Language Acquisition.....	10
Our Approach to Literacy .....	10
Our Approach to Mathematics.....	11
Our Approach to Science .....	11
Our Approach to Physical Development .....	12
Our Approach to Social and Emotional Development .....	12
Our Approach to Discipline and Guidance.....	12
Policies and Procedures .....	13
Accreditation/Licensing.....	13
Address, Telephone or Work Changes .....	13
Arrival and Departure .....	14
Assessment.....	16
Behavior Management Policy.....	17
Celebration of Birthdays .....	19
Cell Phones .....	19
Clothing.....	19
Communication.....	20
Diapers .....	22
Emergency Information .....	22

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

Emergency Procedures.....	22
Family Involvement.....	23
Nutrition Policies.....	24
Grouping.....	27
Handwashing.....	28
Health and Safety.....	28
Mandated DFPS Postings.....	30
Naptime/Sleeping Arrangements.....	31
Notification of Absences.....	32
Outdoor Play.....	32
Parent Custody Issues.....	32
Personal Items from Home.....	33
Photography.....	33
Safety/Security/Access.....	33
Sanitation and Cleaning.....	33
Speech/Hearing/Vision Screening.....	34
Smoking.....	34
Staff Training.....	34
Special Events.....	34
Termination of Enrollment.....	35
Tips for Success.....	35
Toileting and Toilet Training.....	35
Toys.....	36
Tzedakah.....	36
Visitors.....	36

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 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 PHILOSOPHY

Torah Day School was founded on a philosophy that integrates the love of G-d, intellectual knowledge and understanding of the [Torah](#), and the appreciation of the uniqueness of every individual of the community.

Our administration and staff implement this [philosophy](#) in all areas of [Judaic](#) and [general studies](#) while fostering a supportive environment for all our students. A Torah Day School education stresses holistic growth in the academic, spiritual, moral and social/emotional domains.

Rigorous academics are pursued with a recognition that our students possess a variety of learning styles and abilities. Students are taught to apply academic lessons from their practical settings to their daily lives. Respect for each individual's unique identity and talent forms the core of enhancing our students' sense of self.

[Ethics and moral values](#) are explicitly taught, modeled, and practiced throughout the daily life at school. Torah Day School [teachers](#) help students realize that the Judaic and secular worlds are interconnected. Faculty strive to inspire and motivate each child to enjoy learning and accept challenges while stimulating critical thought processes. They also promote the student's sense of responsibility for self and others by active community involvement. Students are encouraged to analyze their learning experiences in order to assess personal strengths and areas for improvement.

The creation of the State of Israel is one of the seminal events in Jewish history. Recognizing the significance of the State and its national institutions, we seek to instill in our students an attachment to the Land of Israel and its people as well as a sensitivity for their welfare.

**By empowering the head, heart and soul, a Torah Day School education provides our students with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become successful members of contemporary society.**

### OUR FACULTY

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Our facility is staffed by early childhood professionals. Our faculty is sensitive to the needs of children and families and is committed to high quality Jewish early childhood education. Teachers regularly attend educational workshops and professional development sessions, receiving a minimum of 24 hours of professional development each year as well as CPR and Pediatric First Aid training.

### **GOALS AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN**

We provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials that emphasize concrete experiential learning in order to achieve the following goals:

1. Foster positive self-concept.
2. Develop social and emotional skills.
3. Develop cognitive skills by encouraging children to think, reason, question, problem solve, and experiment.
4. Encourage language and literacy development.
5. Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices.
6. Enhance physical development and skills.
7. Encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts.
8. Develop appreciation and knowledge of Jewish customs, traditions, and values.
9. Develop respect for social and cultural diversity.
10. Be responsive to individual family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language as well as to the individual learning needs of each child.

### **GOALS AND OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES**

1. To feel supported in terms of your individual family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language.
2. To collaborate actively with our staff in facilitating your child's learning.
3. To develop or enrich your understanding and appreciation of Jewish cultural traditions, values, and celebrations.
4. To have the opportunity to volunteer and participate in our early childhood educational programming.

### **OUR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

Our curriculum:

- Encourages the development of the “whole” child to include the domains of cognitive (early literacy, early mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and appreciation for the arts, health and safety, and social studies when age appropriate), language, social, emotional and physical development.
- Uses *Handwriting Without Tears* and developmentally appropriate practices to plan activities for both the individual child and the class. Standards are incorporated into play, exploration, projects and studies, and large and small group times.
- Presents the developmental (cognitive, social, emotional, physical) and content-based

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

(literacy, math, science, etc.) domains in an integrated manner.

- Reflects diversity (gender, age, language, and abilities) and is culturally sensitive and responsive of individual family's values, beliefs, and home language. This can be observed in interactions as well as evident in equipment and materials.

- Is primarily "child-centered" and emergent. Activities, materials, and themes are "driven" by the developmental needs of children in the classroom as well as their interests. Input into the curriculum also comes from children's families and the community. The teacher capitalizes on these and uses them as an avenue for intentional teaching. Project work is valued and encouraged.

- Is play-based with large blocks of time allocated to children's self-initiated learning choices, which include creative expression and play. The schedule provides opportunities for small-group and large-group activities as well as individualized instruction.

- Provides materials and experiences that are presented in an organized learning environment (both indoors and outdoors) to include learning centers for preschool children. Children freely explore and experiment with materials and other children as well as with teachers who attempt to scaffold learning with them.

- Uses assessment and curriculum goals and objectives that are interrelated and viewed as tools that tie together early learning standards, activities and materials, observation and assessment.

### JUDAICA

As our program is grounded in Judaism and the Jewish religion, these themes are present daily in the classroom. We observe all Jewish holidays, follow the laws of Kashrut (Kosher dietary laws) and continue to teach Jewish values at the child's developmental level. Foods appropriate to Jewish holidays are prepared by and eaten by the children. The daily class music emphasizes songs in Hebrew and English related to Jewish themes. Children will be introduced to a simple Hebrew vocabulary, such as colors, numbers, and names of animals. The visual environment is created by posters, photographs, and objects that reflect our Jewish traditions. Teacher-made and commercial materials and games related to Jewish themes are integrated into daily activities. A Judaic resource coordinator, Morah Chaya Sara Kaufmann, works with each class regularly to provide materials and activities that focus on Jewish customs, traditions, and values. To strengthen family life, the parents are invited to join the children in the celebration of some holidays.

We observe laws of kashrut at TDS. The following policies apply:

- Lunches should be **only dairy** (No meat is allowed).
- Tuna fish, salmon and other non-shellfish seafood may be served with dairy.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are considered kosher.

### OUR APPROACH TO LEARNING

We provide a supportive, nurturing environment that promotes the emotional, social, physical, cognitive, and spiritual development of young children. We work in partnership with families to provide loving, responsive, consistent care and education to their children. Our program serves as a laboratory for the growing child's experiments in the mastery of new skills.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Our program encourages active exploration of the environment, from the youngest child learning through experimentation to the oldest investigating the physics and chemistry of the world around him. We promote curiosity, individual interests, creativity, and the development of self-esteem through play, the vehicle by which children learn and develop. We facilitate a child's development as he/she becomes a competent individual, increasingly independent in action and thought as he or she acquires new skills and knowledge. We view each child as unique and plan for individual needs. In addition, we help children gain an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and we create a setting in which children can participate in cooperative, noncompetitive play.

The environment is set up to be cozy and welcoming as well as stimulating and challenging. Each classroom has its own arrangement of areas and materials, daily schedule and routines that are designed to suit both individual and group needs. Within this framework, children have many choices. There is time to be active, time to relax, time to explore outdoors, time inside. Self-directed activities and materials are available, as are specially prepared ones.

Problem solving, experimentation, and social interactions are encouraged through daily use of developmentally appropriate materials and activities. These may include blocks, dramatic play, water and sand, art, cooking, music, movement, group times, manipulatives, math, science, outdoor play, caring for animals, books, and language experiences.

### **OUR APPROACH TO CREATIVITY**

Our teachers provide an environment that supports creativity by providing a large variety of open-ended materials, ones that lend themselves to various uses. We emphasize process, not product. In the process, the child can learn to experiment, explore, discover, enjoy sensory experiences, communicate, relive experiences, and work out fears. Any end product is usually secondary to the enjoyment of doing the activity for a young child.

### **OUR APPROACH TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Children begin acquiring language from infancy by listening to the sounds of the voices and observing the print that is present in their environment. Teachers promote language acquisition by conversing with children during their play, regular routines, and at mealtimes. Experiences with books, flannel boards, discussions, puppets, storytelling, and other activities aid in the child's language development, help him/her learn about the world, and promote an early appreciation of literature.

### **OUR APPROACH TO LITERACY**

Our approach to literacy development is based on accredited literacy programs, such as Rice Literacy Project and is a continuum of reading and writing development is used as goals of literacy instruction. We introduce the concept of sight words and guided reading with our children.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

We will work with each child based on his/her developmental needs; some children will master skills earlier; some will need more time to develop these skills. Our primary goal is to develop a love of reading and writing while nurturing each child's development in a positive and supportive manner.

### **OUR APPROACH TO MATHEMATICS**

- Mathematical concepts and skills are integrated into our curriculum based on the developmental needs of each child:
- One-to-one correspondence (understanding that one group has the same number of things as another)
- Number sense and counting (the connection between quantities and counting)
- Sets and classifying (things that can be put together in a group based on a common criterion such as color, size, shape, or use)
- Comparing (finding a relationship between two things or sets of things on the basis of a specific characteristic or attribute such as size, height, or number)
- Shape (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, rhombus, and ellipse)
- Space (position: on-off, over-under, in-out, above-below, etc.; direction: up-down, forward-backward, around through; distance: near-far, close to-far from; organization and pattern: arranging things in a pattern until they fit or until they please the eye; construction: change the size and shape of the space to fit what is needed for things)
- Parts and wholes (understanding the idea that some things are made of special parts, that sets of things can be divided into parts, and that whole things can be divided into smaller parts)
- Ordering (higher level of comparing – placing things in a sequence from first to last)
- Patterning (making or discovering patterns such as sequence by color or number, patterns in nature, patterns in movement, such as clapping or marching)
- Measurement of volume, weight, length, temperature, and time (introducing measurement using informal tools such as nonstandard units and estimation).

### **OUR APPROACH TO SCIENCE**

The science curriculum is based on a questioning approach. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment in a hands-on environment that encourages the discovery of cause and effect. They will do:

- Observing – using the senses to gather information about objects or events
- Comparing – looking at similarities and differences in real objects
- Classifying – grouping and sorting according to properties, such as size, shape, color, use, and so on
- Measuring – quantitative descriptions made by an observer either directly through observation or indirectly with a unit of measure
- Communicating – communicating ideas, directions, and descriptions orally or in written form such as pictures or graphs so others can understand.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **OUR APPROACH TO PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

We promote gross motor development by giving children opportunities to use their large muscles in a variety of ways such as walking, running, jumping, and hopping. We have a playground and fields with equipment and activities, which promote the development of competence and confidence in each child's use of their body. Additionally, children experience music and movement with their teachers and a trained instructor.

We promote fine motor development by providing numerous activities such as finger painting, playing with play dough, cutting with scissors, working puzzles, stringing beads, building with blocks, drawing and "writing".

### **OUR APPROACH TO SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

We support a child's developing sense of self. We provide a nurturing environment of encouragement and genuine respect so that children are able to develop confidence and competence by being given chances to take initiative, experience success in performing difficult tasks, and figuring things out for themselves. We encourage children to learn self-help skills such as serving their own snack and water, dressing and undressing, toileting, washing hands, and cleaning up after themselves. Developing these skills adds to the child's feelings of accomplishment and self-worth.

### **OUR APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE**

Like all aspects of child development, emotional development progresses in stages; time and maturity are needed for children to develop emotional mastery and behavioral control. Our goal is to help children develop independent, responsible, and caring behavior and to develop positive self-esteem.

Our teachers help children find constructive ways to express needs and feelings, ways that are reasonable for particular levels of social competence and maturity. Because a young child does not yet understand the consequences of behaviors, we provide appropriate limits. This allows children to explore with confidence, knowing that an adult will protect them against injury. These limits match the level of development and the individual needs of each child; they are simply and consistently stated, along with an explanation of what the child is supposed to do and a reason why the behavior in question is unacceptable.

There are many strategies a teacher may use when a child exhibits challenging behaviors. Effective techniques may include redirection to a different activity; problem solving and negotiation; restructuring the classroom space or schedule; reinforcement of positive behaviors; ignoring negative actions; providing activities that are of interest to the child; or anticipating problems and eliminating them before they occur and using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior. We emphasize helping children solve problems themselves. We help them identify the problem and generate possible solutions and to find mutually satisfying solutions.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Children learn to express their feelings and ideas as well as to listen to others as they express themselves. Depending upon the age and the individual, this may mean more facilitation on the part of the teachers. Gradually, as a child matures, the responsibility for managing behaviors transfers from the adult to the child as he/she gains more competence in handling his/her own problems and gains more self-control.

We recognize that at times a child can exhibit certain behaviors at school and others at home; the demands on a child in a group setting are often very different from what is required at home. Families are asked to keep teachers informed about routines at home and any changes that may occur in the child's home life. Regular written and/or verbal communication is maintained with parents, and conferences and family meetings are scheduled throughout the year. These conferences serve many purposes from simple information sharing to active problem solving regarding disturbing or difficult behaviors. Teachers and parents work together to find a consistent approach; this sometimes means changing a routine or approach at home or trying a new technique, but always maintaining open lines of communication.

### **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 certification 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](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

### **ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, OR WORK CHANGES**

Any changes in address, phone number, work location, e-mail address, or emergency contact information must be reported promptly to the School Office and changed on your child's records. You may email the updated information to [info@tdshouston.org](mailto:info@tdshouston.org).

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 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.

To provide a consistent and positive learning environment for your child please help us by:

- Helping your child put his/her belongings in the cubby
- Children in EC2 – K may use early care. Do not leave any child unattended. All children must be walked to early care, which takes place in the lunchroom or the playground area.
- It is beneficial for all children to be a part of the morning circle routine. Check with your child's teachers about the time of their meeting.
- Let a teacher know if you need help when you are ready to say good-bye to your child.
- No cell phone use during carpool.

Additionally, as we are establishing routines for the children that help them feel more secure and competent, please take your visits with other parents outside of the classroom.

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](mailto:info@tdshouston.org).
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, fax, or email 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.

There is **no parking** or **passing** permitted in the car pool lane.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

Turn your engine off while assisting your child in and out of the vehicle. - *EC 2 see arrival information*

Parents must buckle their own child into the car seat before leaving the car pool lane.

### **Early Dismissal on Half Days**

EC1—Kindergarten: 11:45 a.m.

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

EC1	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon (optional extended day till 2:15)
EC 2	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon (optional extended day till 2:15)
EC 3	8:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.
PreK	8:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

**Aftercare** for EC 1, EC2, EC 3, PreK and 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. If you wish to walk your child inside, please use the properly designated parking spot in the lot.**

Students need to arrive at school on time. Promptness ensures a successful adjustment to the daily routine. EC 1 students must be walked in by a parent, guardian or older sibling of elementary age. Cars of EC 1 parents need to be parked in the parking lot. There is no parking in front of the dish Mikveh.

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.

### **SEPARATION PROCEDURES**

Separation can be a difficult time for children, the following outlines how we will assist at drop off:

- Teachers will step in as needed
- When the parent is ready the teacher will be ready to assist
- They will engage the child in an appropriate activity
- We ask that you tell your child you will be back later
- A conference will be held to discuss next steps if separation continues to be difficult for the family

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

- The following outlines procedure for separation from the class due to illness while waiting to be picked up:
- Teachers will explain to the child what is going to happen and who will be picking them up
- The child will be taken to the front office where they will remain with a familiar adult until they are picked up

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### *OUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT: METHODS AND PROCEDURES*

Our teachers and director of the Early Childhood Program use a variety of formal and informal measures to assess routinely the growth and physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of your child. Teachers receive on-going professional development on the use of assessment procedures, including interpretation of the results as well as the conditions under which children are assessed. Assessment will occur within the natural setting of the classroom. The information from the assessments, parent input and screenings for the children will be integrated with the curriculum goals and lesson planning to support individual learning styles and needs.

#### *USE AND PURPOSE*

We use assessment for the following purposes:

- To describe the developmental progress and learning of children
- To improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment
- To identify children's interests and needs
- To identify children who may require intervention and arrange for developmental screening and referrals for diagnostic assessment
- To communicate with families
- To plan program improvement

#### *ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS*

Assessment portfolios consisting of work samples, observations, anecdotal records, assessment rating, scales data, and other methods to assess and record development and abilities, will be kept by the classroom teacher each year for each child and updated regularly during the year. The assessment portfolios will be shared with the family at parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring and as requested at other times during the year.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The goal of all classroom management is to help the child become self-disciplined. This is viewed as an integral part of educating the young child. Discipline at TDS Preschool will take the form of positive reinforcement and a clear understanding of the classroom rules.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

The school recognizes that children are unique individuals who behave and learn in different ways. The goal of the teacher is to scaffold the learning process in her class, thereby fostering problem solving techniques which is key to success.

The school encourages children to be independent and to solve their own problems. The school takes into consideration behavior that is typical and developmentally appropriate and provides developmentally appropriate equipment, materials, and activities. Expectations are stated in the positive form, such as “please walk” versus “don’t run.”

The child is allowed and encouraged to appropriately express anger, frustration, sadness, hurt, or fear, all of which are honest, healthy emotions. This is allowed with the understanding that all other children are safe. If necessary, in order to prevent a child from hurting himself or others or from doing damage to equipment, a teacher will calmly, but firmly, hold a child to prevent such harm. The child will be held as lovingly as possible, with a helpful attitude rather than a punishing or admonishing one. No corporal (physical) punishment is used.

Children with consistent difficulties are taken through the above policies. Parents, teachers, and directors may confer for special circumstances.

### AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Children do not always have the verbal skills necessary to express anger, frustration, sadness, hurt, fear, etc. These emotions may thus be expressed through aggressive behavior, including hitting, pushing, and/or biting. As the child grows older, with help and guidance, s/he will learn to replace aggressive behaviors with appropriate verbal responses.

If your child bites or hits, you may feel embarrassed even if you acknowledge that the behavior is not an uncommon phenomenon among young children. If your child is the victim, you may feel anger at the teacher, the other child’s parents, or the child himself for the hurt caused to your child.

At school, we use a variety of techniques to deal with these situations, including determining if there is a pattern as to when the behavior occurs, if there is a cause/effect relationship, and/or if the aggressor is gaining negative attention or experiencing frustration. We tell the aggressor (with our voice and facial expressions) that the behavior is unacceptable, and we teach him/her the acceptable way to handle the situation (e.g., “Use your words to tell your friend what you want.”) We also give help and comfort to the victim and teach him/her proper assertive skills with which to respond. We also provide very close supervision so we can avoid aggression, as much as possible, and use the opportunity to “practice” the proper social skills needed.

Understanding and support for the other parents, children, and teachers can help. One of the best things we can do is work together and help one another while the children learn to express themselves in more positive ways.

An outside consultant may be called in for assistance if there is unusual behavior exhibited by a child.

### CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

If a child is engaging in continual challenging behavior, the teacher will consult with the Director. For children with persistent, serious, challenging behavior, teachers, families,

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement a plan that supports the child's success. Examples of challenging behaviors include physical aggression (hitting, biting, shoving, whacking with toys), relational aggression ("You can't play with us", verbal bullying), tantrums, whining, testing limits, refusal to follow directions or observe classroom rules.

Parents are expected to meet with teachers and the EC Director to work with the program to help your child overcome challenging behavior. In the event that the child's behaviors do not improve, a family may be asked to withdraw the child from the program.

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

TDS recognizes that any child at any time may have "special circumstances" 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.

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 Early Childhood 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.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

### CELEBRATION OF BIRTHDAYS

It is our policy to ensure birthday celebrations are a positive experience for every child. To avoid hurt feelings, we have adopted the following guidelines:

- To maintain a “nut free” environment, TDS will provide everything needed for all birthday parties. The cost is \$20.00 payable to the office. The cost includes cupcakes, paper goods, juice, and lots of fun!
- Goody bags, balloons and/or individual student gifts will not be distributed in school. Parents are encouraged to donate a gift to the class in lieu of “goodie bags” and/or individual student gifts. Please refer to the wish list that each class has on Amazon. Thank you for fulfilling a class “wish” in honor of your child’s birthday.
- Birthday parties celebrated in class are for classmates, parents and grandparents only! (Please do not ask for other siblings to be pulled from class.)
- Please contact Mrs. Kaufmann one week in advance to schedule your child’s birthday party at 713-777-2000.

### 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 Early Childhood hallways, classrooms, or playgrounds. Use of cell phones while driving in the TDS parking lot is prohibited.

### CLOTHING

Children should dress in comfortable, durable and washable clothing. Clothing that is easy to put on and take off encourages independence at toilet time.

Our program promotes hands on exploration of all kinds. These kinds of experiences can be messy, and even though we use washable paint and shirts or smocks to protect clothing, spills and stains may still occur. Please keep this in mind when selecting your child’s clothing for school.

Rubber-soled athletic shoes are best for active young children. Boots with slippery bottoms can be hazardous, sandals (*including croc-style*) get mulch or rocks stuck in them, and dressy shoes may be slippery; therefore, please send your child in only **closed toe, closed back, rubber soled shoes**. Each child needs to have a complete change of clothes labeled with his or her name at school. We do not have extra clothing in reserve. If your child uses any items from another student, it is essential to wash and return them the following day. All articles of removable clothing (jackets, sweaters, hats, etc.) should be marked clearly with the child’s name. Dress your child for active play and learning.

The children participate in art activities daily. In spite of wearing protective smocks, they may get messy paint (or other media) on their clothing. Please be aware that your child’s clothes may get dirty or stained while at school so please dress your child accordingly.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Make sure your child's clothing can be easily managed during toileting. A young child's self-esteem is enhanced when he or she can be independent. Belts and overalls are a hindrance.

Children play outdoors daily. Therefore, be sure your child has proper clothing for sudden changes in temperature. Please label all of your child's outerwear.

### **COMMUNICATION**

We believe that direct, effective communication is at the heart of a stimulating, safe, caring program for young children. 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 program information. We are counting on you to stay informed by checking your emails from our program, checking your child's cubby, reading classroom documentation, notes and newsletter from the teachers. Please let know if you want any additional information.

If you have questions concerning day-to-day operations, the program, or your child's care or education, we expect you to discuss them with your child's teachers at an appropriate time and setting. Open, respectful communication often clarifies a situation before it becomes a problem. If a resolution cannot be reached with your child's teacher, parents are then expected to speak with the Early Childhood Director to discuss a solution to your concern.

Please understand that we avoid transferring calls to your child's classroom during the day because we want the teachers attending to the children rather than talking on the phone. We will give them your message or check on your child. Teachers will return your call during the student's naptime or after school. Please return calls from the school as soon as possible.

#### *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.

#### *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 called into the school office.

#### *NEWSLETTERS/FLYERS*

Newsletters are sent home to keep you informed of program activities, reminders, and other information. We feel that it is very important for each parent to stay informed!

In addition to the weekly Thursday Thunder, parents will receive a weekly class correspondence describing the children's activities. The newsletters will be one way to keep you aware of and involved in the school's curriculum and activities. These newsletters are e-mailed, if you would like a paper copy please request one at the office.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Every classroom has labeled cubbies for each student's backpack. Messages, flyers, and classroom information sheets will be placed in your child's backpack or lunchbox. It is your responsibility to check backpacks for messages. Artwork from the week will be sent home each Friday in your child's blue bag.

Please do not distribute flyers, letters, or advertisements without approval of the Early Childhood Director.

### **FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

A "meet and greet" is scheduled at the beginning of the year for you to become more acquainted with your child's teacher, ask questions and become more familiar with the space your child will be spending the year in. Conferences with the teacher will be scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss your child's development and progress. Teachers are willing to schedule additional conferences upon request.

Scheduled conferences for children in all classes are opportunities for the parents and teachers to discuss the development of the child. Our staff is always available for additional conferences at the parent's 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.

### **DIAPERS**

Please bring an ample supply of diapers for your child; we will let you know when the supply is running low.

Please label each diaper with your child's first name or initials. All diapering supplies must be stored in a place inaccessible to children, so please give them to a teacher rather than putting them in your child's bag or cubby.

Please bring your child to school with a clean diaper, and in turn, we will send your child home in a clean diaper. Diapers are checked throughout the day. They are changed on a schedule and also on an "as needed" basis.

### **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 nearest appropriate medical facility for treatment, or 911 may be called.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

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

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

#### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The plan to respond to such emergencies as fire, severe weather, intruder, or chemical spill is available upon request in the Director's office. In the event of an evacuation, please know that there is the possibility that staff will have to use personal vehicles for this purpose. Great precaution will be taken to ensure the safety of your child.

#### Emergency Evacuation

Our program conducts fire drills monthly and severe weather drills. If an evacuation is ordered by the local fire or police department, TDS reserves the right to follow the evacuation and transportation orders to the emergency location determined by the authorities. The school office will notify parents the location.

#### **1. Evacuation, relocation, and sheltering/lock down of children including:**

- A. 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 Rabbi Francis or the local fire or police department informs us that it is safe to re-enter. Parents will be notified about all evacuations.
- B. In the event that the building needs to be evacuated, staff will walk all children down Portal to the Milne Elementary School located at 7800 Portal Drive, phone number 713-778-3420. Each teacher will take attendance several times while walking to the location. Each teacher will have the red emergency folders with them; this folder contains all student pertinent information and the daily attendance. Once the children are safely relocated then one teacher from each class will call parents (teachers will use personal cell phones for this procedure).
- C. EC 1 children who are not able to walk as quickly as others will be placed in a wagon that is stored in the small playground adjacent to the building. These children will be wheeled to the relocation school.
- D. All teachers will familiarize themselves with the emergency/relocation diagrams that are in each room in the school. If a teacher is entering a new location in the school, she must check the diagram upon entering.
- E. The Milne School address is 7800 Portal Drive. The phone number is 713- 778-3420.
- F. Attendance will be taken at the Milne School by each teacher.

#### **2. Communication**

- A. Emergency phone number on file with DFPS is 713-870-4300.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

B. Rabbi Francis will notify DFPS, Fire and Police Dept., Medical services and Health Dept. Teachers will notify all parents using their personal cell phones.

### 3. Staff – evacuate and relocate

- A. All info in red folders taking with class during evacuation. Lead teacher will take and keep folder with them throughout the evacuation.
- B. Authorization for emergency care is in the red folder along with all other pertinent information for the student.
- C. All staff will stay with students until each child in their care is picked up.
- D. Once the evacuation, relocation or sheltering /lock down is lifted, parents must come into the relocation area to pick up their children. Each child must be signed out by his/her parent, before leaving the area. Once all children are picked up then Rabbi Francis dismisses staff.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

The decision about closing the Early Childhood Center 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 TDS text message.

## 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: Pizza Lunch, assisting with special events, 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.

## NUTRITION POLICIES

### SNACKS/LUNCHESES

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.

Nutrition policies and suggestions are based on guidelines of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS).

TDFPS policy states, "Each child in care for four to seven hours must be served one meal and one snack, equal to 1/3 of their daily food needs." A child who is in care

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

for more than seven hours must be offered “two snacks and one meal, equal to 1/2 of their daily food needs.”

Foods to avoid (due to high 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  
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 returned home.

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.

Children from the Early Childhood programs should bring their own parve or dairy lunch, drink, and snack. Children may not share food.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

If your child stays for aftercare, send one additional snack, which should be labeled with their name.

### *FOOD SAFETY*

Parents should cut foods into pieces no larger than 1/4 -inch square for infants and 1/2 -inch square for toddlers/twos and threes.

The following foods present a choking hazard and should not be sent at any time for children under the age of 4 years:

- Hard pretzels
- Whole grapes
- Raw chunks of carrots, vegetables or meat larger than can be swallowed whole
- Popcorn
- Raisins, Craisins<sup>®</sup> and other dried fruit
- Raw peas

Children are not permitted to walk around with food or sippy cups and will be asked to sit at a table to finish their food or drink.

### *LUNCHES*

The lunch and snack program has both learning and social components and is an integral part of the day. We will inform you if your child needs more or less food. All children should bring a lunch, snacks and a drink with the utensils they will need for the day. All snacks and lunches are brought from home. We do not heat food. Any hot food should be brought in a thermos.

### *CHILDREN WITH FOOD ALLERGIES*

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.

### *CHILDREN WITH INDIVIDUAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS*

Children 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 in nature, such a vegetarian or vegan, please discuss your preference with the EC Director and your child's teachers to establish a plan of action.

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 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 is 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.

### **GROUPING**

Our program enrolls children beginning at 18 months. Children are grouped according to age and developmental level. The teacher-child ratio varies according to age. The staff-child ratio and group size are based on the TDFPS standards.

Each classroom is staffed with a lead teacher and an assistant teacher who have primary responsibility for working with that group of children. The goal for all classes is continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children and their families with children staying together as a group with the same teachers for at least 10 months or more. The teachers provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to protect children’s well-being.

### **HANDWASHING**

Throughout the day, children and staff wash their hands according to posted guidelines (using soap and water, rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, dry

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

hands and use a paper towel to turn off faucet) before all snacks and meals, after toileting/diaper changes, after playing outside, before and after water play and other times as needed such as after nose wiping, and coming into contact with any bodily fluids.

Parents or visitors that plan to stay longer than a brief time must also wash your hands according to posted hand washing guidelines.

### **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 the Center. 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 comfortable until you pick him or her up.

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 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 s/he has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, 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. Please have your child picked up as soon as possible, within an hour at the latest.

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

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 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.

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 front office, along with a completed medication form. 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. Your licensed health care professional may complete a non-prescription medication form to indicate which OTC medications and dosage(s) 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 Early Childhood 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

Before your child begins the program, and as age-appropriate thereafter, the following information is required:

- Medical Authorization Form: A signed statement from a licensed health care

## ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

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.
- Immunization Records: 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>)
- 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.

### 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:

- Physical abuse - inflicting bodily injury on a child (beating, burning, etc.)
- Sexual abuse - using a child in or exposing her/him to sexual activities, with or without the child's consent
- 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:

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

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **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.

### **NAPTIME/SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**

All children are required to rest quietly for a period of time as mandated by TDFPS Minimum Standards. The children have participated in a busy morning filled with numerous activities, and all ages need time to relax their bodies. Early risers and non-nappers will be provided quiet activities, such as books or puzzles, after approximately 30 minutes of nap or quiet time. EC1 students and any other nappers must furnish their own nap mats. Crib size sheets and blankets may also be included for the child's comfort and warmth.

### **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.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play is an important element of the program. Children will play outdoors daily, weather, air quality and environmental safety permitting. Children benefit from experiencing many kinds of weather conditions. The American Academy of Pediatrics supports outdoor play *even in extremely cold weather*. In extremely hot weather, outdoor play is limited and drinking water is offered frequently to the children. If conditions prevent outdoor play, similar large motor activities will be provided. Ample clothing should be provided by families in case of cold weather. Layering your child's clothing is desirable

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

during cold weather, so he/she may adjust clothing to maintain a comfortable body temperature.

Our playgrounds offer *some* shade as well as sun. Children should wear sun-protective clothing, such as hats or sunglasses, and sunscreen or sun block. Parents may choose to apply sunscreen or sun block for outdoor play.

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellants due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET can be used with parental permission. Staff can apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission. All insect repellent and sunscreen must be kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom and cannot be kept in your child's cubby or bag.

### **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-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 and pick-up of the child at school 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.

### **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.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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.

### **SANITATION AND CLEANING**

The classroom floors and bathrooms are cleaned and sanitized every evening. The carpets in all classrooms are cleaned monthly or sooner, if needed. Teaching staff sanitize the classroom tables, furniture, sinks, faucet and toilet handles, and other areas of the classroom on a daily basis and as needed throughout the day. Toys and mouthed items are washed and sanitized daily with a diluted bleach solution. Washable toys, pillows, etc., are washed in the preschool classrooms periodically.

### **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. The screenings are administered each year at school. Reports are sent home for any screenings that suggest a need for additional evaluation.

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.

### **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

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

for reporting cases of neglect and abuse; (4) Community organizations that have training programs available to childcare center staff members, children, and parents.

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

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

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

### **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

### **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.
- 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.

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 Mrs. Lazaroff or Mrs. Kaufmann.

## **ECC PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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.

### **TOILETING AND TOILET LEARNING**

Teachers will work with families whose child is showing signs of readiness to learn to use the toilet. Before your child begins the process of toilet learning at school, set up a meeting with your child's teachers to discuss your child's readiness and to develop a mutual plan of action. This is the best way to ensure your child's success.

Children who are in the toilet learning process should bring several extra pairs of underwear and at least two complete changes of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear). Toilet accidents will be handled in a calm, pleasant, and casual manner. Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces will be placed in a bag as is and sent home that day for laundering.

### **TOYS**

Toys from home are only allowed for "show and tell." Play guns, swords, and other toys that encourage aggressive behavior are not allowed at school and are also discouraged for the home.

### **TZEDAKAH**

One of the most beautiful Mitzvot in Judaism is charity. Students are encouraged to bring a coin every day to put in the Tzedakah (charity) box. This experience in giving, helps develop awareness and a commitment to share with others who are less fortunate.

### **VISITORS**

Families of children enrolled in our program 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 children. Please schedule your visit in advance with your child's teacher.

All family members and friends must check in with the office and obtain a visitor badge when visiting the center. All visitors that will be eating or interacting with the children or staying in the classroom or on the playground for more than a couple of minutes must wash their hands upon arrival.