

B”H



**2024-2025
Preschool
Family Handbook
August 14, 2024**

MISSION STATEMENT

“EDUCATE A CHILD ACCORDING TO THEIR WAY.” (Proverbs)

ADMINISTRATION

Rabbi Yitzchok Newman/ Head of School
Mr. David Weiss/Principal
Chanie Perelmuter/Director of Preschool

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Welcome to the Karp Early Childhood Center! A quality early childhood program is instrumental in laying the foundation for future academic success. Our environment is warm and secure, designed to allow each child to maximize their potential for growth and development. This handbook introduces you to our center's curriculum and philosophy, highlighting why we hold an exemplary reputation as leaders in education.

Welcome to the Extended Family of the Hebrew Academy!

About Our School Established in 1969, the Hebrew Academy offers a full curriculum of academic and Judaic studies for students from nursery through high school. Our educational methods encourage students to become independent, responsible, resourceful, and creative learners. Our staff aims to create a responsive environment with personal guidance and support, fostering a love of learning, self-respect, independence, and positive self-esteem.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Hebrew Academy admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national, or ethnic origin in our educational policies, scholarship programs, athletic, and other school-administered programs. In line with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we strive to offer reasonable accommodations to enable children with disabilities to be fully included in our program.

Preschool Calendar August 2024 to June 2025

Thur. Aug. 15-Tue. Aug. 27	ALL SCHOOL CLOSED
Tue., August 27,	Preschool Orientation 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Wed., August 28	First day of School
Mon., Sept. 2	All school closed - Labor Day
Wed., Oct. 2	Erev Rosh Hashanah - School ends at 2:00pm - Daycare
Thurs. & Friday, Oct. 3 & 4	All School closed - Rosh Hashanah
Wed. Oct 9	Picture Day
Fri., Oct. 11	Erev Yom Kippur - Preschool Closed - Daycare
Wed., Oct. 16	Erev Sukkot - School ends at 2:00pm - Daycare
Thurs. & Friday, Oct. 17 & 18	Preschool Closed - Sukkot - Daycare
Wed., Oct. 23	Erev Simchat Torah - School ends at 2:00pm - Daycare
Thurs. & Friday, Oct. 24 & 25	Preschool Closed - Sukkot - Daycare
Mon.,Nov. 11	No School - Conferences - Daycare
Thur. Nov. 21	Picture retake day
Wed. Nov. 27	Preschool Performance & Feast - Noon- School closes at 2:00 PM - Daycare until 4:00PM
Thur. & Fri., Nov. 28 & 29	All school closed - Thanksgiving
Tue. Dec 10	All school closes at 3:30 - NO DAYCARE PD
Mon., Dec. 23 - Wed., Jan. 1	All school closed - Winter break
Thur. Jan. 2	School Resumes
Mon., Jan. 20	All school closed for Students - PD for Staff
Mon., Feb. 17	All school closed - Presidents Day
Fri., March 14	Purim Celebration - 9:30 - 12:30 - Daycare
Thurs. April 10	No School - Daycare
Fri., April 11	All School closed - No Daycare
Mon. April 14,	All School closed - No Daycare
Tue. April 15 - Fri., April 18	No School - Passover (Daycare)
Mon., April 21	All School closed - No Daycare
Tue., April 22	School Resumes
Fri., April 25	3:00 Dismissal begins
Friday, May 9	Mother's Day Tea 8:30 AM
Monday, May 26	All school closed - Memorial Day
Mon. & Tue., June 2 & 3	No School - Shavuot - Daycare
Fri., June 13	Preschool End of year Performance & Celebration 8:30 AM
Wed., June 18	Last day of school - All School closes at 11:30 - No Daycare
Thur. & Fri., June 19 & 20	Regular classes for Infant Center No Daycare
Monday, June 23	Kiddy Camp begins
Thur., July 3	No daycare - All School ends at 4:00PM
Fri., , July 4	All School Closed
Wed., August 13	Last day of Kiddy Camp
August 14- August 26	All School Closed
Wed., August 27, 2025	First day of school

Note: School is in session 8:05 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Half day is 8:05 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Students need to be signed out **BEFORE 12:30**)

BEFORE AND AFTER DAYCARE

*Early care starts at 7:30 and after care is from 3:30 to 5:00. **Students need to be picked up and signed out BEFORE 5:00PM.** Children not picked up before 3:40 will be automatically placed in daycare and parents will be charged. The fee for before and after school care is \$5.00 per hour. (The late fee after 5:00 is \$2.00 per minute.) Friday daycare will end at 4:00PM.*

**When it says “No school - daycare” it means the Infant Center is open, and there is an extra fee for children 2-5 years old. (The cost is \$80 per day by reservation only.) When it says “All school closed” - Infant Center and Preschool are closed.*

SEPTEMBER THROUGH APRIL 4 - FRIDAY DISMISSAL - 2:00 PM.

APRIL 25 THROUGH JUNE - FRIDAY DISMISSAL - 3:00 PM

(This calendar is subject to change; we will notify you of any changes in advance.)

Infant Center Calendar - August 2024 to June 2025

Wed., August 14	Last day of Kiddy Camp
Thur. Aug. 15-Tue. Aug. 27	ALL SCHOOL CLOSED
Tue., August 27,	Preschool Orientation 10:00 AM - 12 PM
Wed., August 28	First day of School
Mon., Sept. 2	All school closed - Labor Day
Thurs. & Friday, Oct. 3 & 4	All School closed - Rosh Hashanah
Wed. Oct 9	Picture Day
Thur. Nov. 21	Picture retake day
Wed. Nov. 27	Preschool Performance & Feast - School closes at 2:00PM - Infant Center closes at 4:00PM
Thur. & Fri., Nov. 28 & 29	All school closed - Thanksgiving
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Mon., Jan. 20	All school closed for Students - PD for Staff
Mon., Feb. 17	All school closed - Presidents Day
Fri., March 14	Purim Celebration - 9:30 - 12:30 - Daycare
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Mon., April 21	All School closed
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Wed., June 18	Last day of school - All School closes at 11:30 No Daycare
Thur. & Fri., June 19 & 20	Regular classes for Infant Center No Daycare
Monday, June 23	Kiddy Camp begins
Thur., July 3	No daycare - All School ends at 4:00PM
Fri., July 4	All School Closed
Wed., August 13	Last day of Kiddy Camp / School
August 14 - August 26	All School Closed
Wed., August 27, 2025	First day of school

*The Infant room opens at 7:30 and ends at 5:00 (Students must be signed out **BEFORE** 5:00PM). (The late fee after 5:00 is \$2.00 per minute.)*

Open Door Policy

Parents are always welcome to visit the Preschool. We have an open door policy for all parents of enrolled children, who must check in with the office upon arrival. Parents and grandparents can participate in the school, providing additional enrichment activities as needed, including career exploration and discussions about community helpers.

Staffing

Our teachers are certified, professional early childhood educators who participate in local and national seminars, in-service training, and weekly staff meetings. This ensures they stay current with new research and philosophies in early childhood education. All students are under adult supervision at all times.

Philosophy

The Hebrew Academy's philosophy focuses on educating the whole child by promoting intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and ethical growth. We strive to instill self-worth and a lifelong commitment to learning and Judaism. Our curriculum balances play and academics in a developmentally appropriate manner, within an extended family atmosphere. Our Jewish Studies program is based on the Torah, aiming to develop competent, enthusiastic, and resourceful citizens who can succeed as loyal Americans and proud Jews.

Why Choose the Hebrew Academy Preschool?

Our atmosphere is open and inviting, allowing children to express themselves and thrive. Our professional and warm teachers foster maximum communication between parents and staff, promoting the best school experience for your child. Our program encourages exploration and learning by doing, teaching children to care about their heritage and family, which helps build self-esteem. The curriculum includes activities that develop social, emotional, cultural, cognitive, and physical skills.

An Academic Developmental Curriculum

Our Early Childhood Program is based on the developmental readiness of each child. Activities engage all the senses and promote exploration. The classroom environment supports these activities, including role-playing, active learning, reading, music, and movement. Children are exposed to pre-reading activities daily through our literacy program. Outdoor activities like gardening, sand, and water play also support physical and creative development.

Heritage & Culture

Our integrated program combines Jewish and American customs with a unique developmental Judaic Curriculum. The children learn Hebrew language words through song, dance, and story, used daily in the classroom. They gain knowledge and love for Judaism and Israel through Biblical stories, geography, and cultural activities, fostering a strong sense of community.

Entry Dates

As of September 1, 2014, public and private schools in Long Beach and Orange County no longer accept students who are not 5 years old by September 1 into their traditional Kindergarten program. To accommodate this cutoff, the Hebrew Academy preschool program has been organized as follows:

- **Pre-K 2024:** Students must be 4 years old by September 1, 2024.

Forms and Records

Before admission, parents must complete an application, including state and medical forms. Parents or guardians must sign an agreement indicating the fees and payment schedule, which is based on an annual fee divided equally over ten months. Some required forms are mandated by the Department of Social Services Licensing Division; failure to complete these forms may result in citations.

If any information changes during the year, such as phone numbers or emergency contacts, parents must notify the school promptly.

Cell Phone Policy

While cell phones are convenient, they can be distracting. We ask parents to make phone calls outside the preschool facilities to ensure full attention is given to their child. Please turn off or mute and put away your phone before entering the preschool gates.

Car Pools / Parking and Sign In / Sign Out

Parents must park in the lot or on Willow Lane and walk to the preschool to drop off and pick up their children. Parking is not allowed in handicap spaces or yellow-striped areas.

Sign In:

- Find your child's name, sign your full name (no initials, per state law), and the time.
- Indicate with a "B" if your child will take the bus home or an "M" if medicine will be administered that day.

Sign Out:

- Find your child's name and sign your full name and the time in the second box. A new sheet is provided daily.

Please do not bring your child to school after 11:30 AM. Try to schedule appointments in the afternoon.

Dropoff:

- Enter at the main gate of the preschool (off the parking lot).
- For late drop-offs, use the front entrance near the preschool office.

Pick Up:

- Half day: Arrive between 12:15-12:25 PM.
- Full day: Arrive between 3:15-3:25 PM.

Requiring parents to sign their children in and out of daycare with a legal signature and time is indeed a crucial practice for several reasons:

1. Safety and Security: Accurate attendance records help ensure the safety and security of the children. Knowing the exact drop-off and pick-up times allows daycare staff to keep track of who is on the premises, preventing unauthorized access and ensuring that children are released only to authorized individuals.
2. Legal and Liability Issues: In the event of an incident, these records provide critical documentation that the daycare followed proper procedures. They can be used as evidence to show compliance with regulations and to resolve any disputes related to the child's care and supervision.
3. Emergency Situations: Up-to-date attendance logs are essential during emergencies. Whether it's a fire drill, natural disaster, or other urgent situation, accurate records help ensure that all children are accounted for and evacuated safely, minimizing the risk of any child being left behind.
4. Compliance with Regulations: Many jurisdictions require daycare centers to maintain detailed attendance records. These records are often reviewed during inspections or audits, and failing to maintain them can result in penalties or even the loss of the daycare's license.

Overall, the practice of requiring a legal signature and time for signing children in and out supports the safety, accountability, and legal compliance of daycare facilities, contributing to a secure and well-managed environment for children.

Dress Standards

Children should wear comfortable, practical clothing suitable for active play and sensory activities. Clothing should not be too fussy or delicate. An extra set of clothing (socks, underwear, blouse/shirt, pants/skirt) should be kept in the child's cubby. A sweater or light jacket should also be kept at school, labeled with the child's name.

Avoid flip-flops or crocs; children should wear easy-to-remove clothing and shoes to promote independence.

Change of Clothing

Please send the following items in a large zip-locked bag labeled with your child's name:

- 2 pairs of socks
- 2 pairs of underwear
- 1 shirt/blouse
- 1 pair of pants/skirt/jumper

Replace any soiled or wet items the next day.

Rest Time

Send rest time items in a pillowcase labeled with your child's name, including:

- 1 fitted standard-sized crib sheet (labeled)
- 1 small blanket (labeled)

No pillows, please. Rest time items will be sent home every Friday for cleaning and should be returned clean on Monday.

Earthquake Kit

In a large zip-locked bag clearly labeled, include:

- 1 small package of individually wrapped Handi-Wipes
- 1 flashlight
- 1 package of batteries (not in flashlight)
- 1 small personal item (e.g., teddy bear, toy)
- 1 3x5 card with the child's name, emergency contact number, and address

Fire & Earthquake Drills

Regular drills are conducted to ensure quick and safe evacuation, aiming to clear the building within two minutes. Teachers train students in these procedures.

Security Lock-Down Drills

The school has a plan for security lock-downs, with teachers trained in the procedure and drills conducted throughout the year.

In an Emergency

In emergencies, the school has arranged an out-of-state contact number (718-604-1292) for parents to call for information about their children.

When Your Child Is Ill

- **Check your child's temperature at home before coming to school.**
- **Keep children home if they show signs of illness, including a temperature of 100.4°F or higher, excessive coughing, sneezing, or runny nose.**
- **Children must be symptom-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to school.**
- **If a child vomits more than two times in 24 hours (& it is not from a known condition) your child will need to be picked up.**
- **Diarrhea - Stool is not contained in the diaper / Diarrhea is causing accidents for toilet trained children. Stool frequency exceeds 2 stools above normal during the time the child is in school. Children need to be symptom free for 24 hours.**
- **If your child shows symptoms while at school, they will be separated from the rest of the children and you will need to pick him/her up within 30 minutes.**
- **Children with vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms may need a doctor's note to return.**

It is urgent that every parent cooperate fully with our health policies! Our regulations are designed to protect the well-being of all the children and to guard, as much as possible, against avoidable absences for health reasons.

When symptoms of possible illness arise, or other indications that your child is not well enough for group activity, arrangements MUST BE MADE for their care at home. PLEASE, do not bring a "borderline" ill child to school hoping they will pass. A proper place for a sick child is at home, so they will not infect other children or their teachers. The school has no provisions for the care of children who become ill at school. Proper care at the beginning of an illness can often shorten the duration and prevent infection of other children.

Routine Exclusion Criteria Applicable to All Signs and Symptoms

- Unable to participate.
- Care would compromise staff's ability to care for other children.

Medicine

To administer medication during school, please:

- Place an "M" on the sign-in sheet.
- Hand medication directly to a staff member in a plastic bag.
- All medication must have a prescription label.
- Inform staff if medication was administered before school.

No over-the-counter medication will be given without a physician's instructions. (prescription! This is a state law.)

Lunch

Nutritious meals are crucial for a child's success at school. The Hebrew Academy provides hot lunches for \$5.00, payable in advance or \$6.00 on the day of.

Lunches from Home:

- Include a nutritious meal with a drink; no candy or soda.
- Avoid breakable containers and clearly label lunch bags.
- Provide utensils if needed and remember that young children typically eat smaller portions.
- Avoid foods that need boiling water added.

Please refrain from sending shellfish or meat products (beef or poultry) with your child's lunch. A separate morning & afternoon snack should also be provided.

Lunch Ideas:

- Cheese and crackers, vegetables and dip, hard-boiled eggs, sandwiches, wraps, pasta salad, yogurt, etc.

For children in the Young Toddler or Toddler class, cut food into small, manageable pieces to reduce choking hazards.

Potty Training Policy

Children entering the 4's and Pre-K classes must be fully potty trained. **For children in the Toddler and 3's classes, potty training plans should be discussed with the teacher and approved by the director when the parent feels the child is ready.** Signs of readiness include the child communicating about a soiled diaper, showing discomfort while in a soiled diaper, or expressing interest in using the toilet.

Before coming to school in underwear, your child must have a successful 3-day weekend at home. It is important to start this new routine on the first day of the school week,

setting a precedent that diapers are no longer worn to school. Staff can manage two accidents per day; after that, the child will be put back into a diaper or pull-up, and the process will start fresh on their next school day. Children will never be punished or humiliated due to accidents. Please provide a full change of clothes in your child's cubby for accidents.

Share Days/Toys

Share days are determined by your child's teacher. We encourage bringing items related to the curriculum. Please clearly mark items and avoid bringing toy guns, knives, or other toy weapons, as these are not in keeping with the values we teach.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah, meaning "charity" or "righteousness," is a fundamental concept in Judaism. We encourage students to donate a few pennies daily to help those less fortunate. Parents are asked to provide their children with one coin each day.

Mitzvah Notes

Throughout the school year, children learn about different mitzvot (good deeds). It's important to recognize these actions to encourage more mitzvot. Please send short mitzvah notes to school as often as possible. Examples include:

- "Today, Leah shared nicely with her..."
- "Last night, Rachel slept in her own bed..."
- "Today, Sam sat nicely in his car seat..."
- "Last night, Jacob said Shema so nicely..."

Swimming (TK & 4's Classes)

The Hebrew Academy's Junior Olympic swimming pool, with a special kiddy pool, offers refreshing recreation and exercise. A licensed lifeguard is always present during swimming. Please send the following items **labeled with your child's name**: swimsuit, sunscreen, towel or robe, swim shoes, and a brush or comb. Children not fully potty trained must wear a reusable swim diaper over their swim diaper. Long hair should be braided or tied back on swimming days.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations can be held in the classroom with students and teachers. Cupcakes may be purchased from the school kitchen. Invitations for parties held outside of school should be mailed using the school roster and not distributed in school. We ask that all class-related private parties respect Shabbat and Kosher dietary restrictions to ensure inclusivity and respect for all families.

Pupil Assessment/Evaluation

In September, we use the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ-3™) to screen all Preschool students. This parent-completed assessment helps us understand each child's developmental needs. Parents receive informal updates and a formal assessment in November, followed by a parent-teacher conference. Another conference is held later in the year (April/May) to review progress. Teachers and administrators may request additional meetings with parents as needed, and parents are encouraged to request meetings to discuss specific concerns.

Students with Special Needs/Special Tracking

The Hebrew Academy aims to meet the academic and social needs of all students, including those with special needs. When such a student is enrolled, teachers receive advance notice and a team meeting is convened to plan appropriate program modifications and goals. Regular meetings with parents ensure the student's progress, and parents may be asked to hire a para/shadow if necessary.

Parental Requests of Teachers Related to Divorce Proceedings

Recognizing the complexities of divorce proceedings, teachers are required to remain neutral and refrain from taking sides, especially regarding parental custody issues. The Hebrew Academy administration will deny any requests for employees to write letters supporting one parent over another, as teacher time is focused on educating all students.

In divorce situations, the school requires all relevant legal documents to be on file and updated regularly. If no documents are on file, the school will consider either parent as the custodial parent.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All Hebrew Academy Preschool staff members are legally mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Such incidents are reported to the Department of Social Services at 714-703-2800. If a parent suspects abuse or neglect by a staff member, they should notify the director immediately or contact the Department of Social Services. In cases where a teacher is suspected of abuse, Child Protective Services will be contacted, and an investigation will begin. The suspected teacher will not interact with children until the investigation is complete and appropriate disciplinary actions are taken.

Concerns

We welcome constructive feedback to improve our services. If you have concerns about the preschool or the care your child is receiving, please communicate them to the Director of the Preschool. We ensure that voicing concerns will not adversely affect the care provided to your child.

Communications

A successful partnership between home and school is built on clear and frequent communication. Teachers maintain communication through weekly newsletters and special event flyers. Please ensure the email address provided to the school is regularly checked.

Questions about your child's program or progress should be directed to the child's teacher, primarily via email, which will be provided on the first day of school. The Director of the Preschool, Chanie, is also available for further clarification and can be reached at 714-863-0757. Teachers aim to respond to emails within 24 hours. Please note that teachers cannot be called from the classroom to answer phone calls.

Behavior Guidance

We aim to help children become happy, reasonable, and cooperative participants in the program through positive and non-threatening behavior guidance techniques. Staff encourage positive attitudes, empathy, and acceptance of differences among children, including those with special or additional needs.

Some guidance strategies for inappropriate behavior include:

- **Redirection and Diversion:** Redirecting children to other activities.
- **Positive Role Modeling:** Staff demonstrating appropriate behavior.
- **Encouragement and Positive Feedback:** Reinforcing appropriate behavior.
- **Minimal Attention to Inappropriate Behavior:** Except when it involves harm, minimal attention is given to attention-seeking behavior.
- **Focusing on the Victim:** Giving more attention to the child who has been hurt rather than the child doing the hurting.
- **Providing Choices and Consequences:** Offering choices within agreed limits and explaining consequences if limits are exceeded.
- **Table for One:** Providing an activity at a separate table to allow a child to calm down alone.
- **Firm but Calm Communication:** Addressing inappropriate actions calmly and firmly, focusing on the action rather than the child.
- **Verbal Communication of Feelings:** Teaching children to express their feelings verbally (e.g., "I don't like it when you hurt my...") instead of physically lashing out.

By adhering to these strategies, we aim to create a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes positive behavior and emotional growth.

Termination of Enrollment Due to Disciplinary Difficulties

The Hebrew Academy reserves the right to terminate enrollment if a child's behavior endangers the safety and well-being of other children or staff members.

For children with special needs, we refer them to the appropriate community service agencies. Acceptance into the Hebrew Academy preschool program does not guarantee acceptance into the Hebrew Academy kindergarten.



2024 – 2025 SCHOOL YEAR

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE HEBREW ACADEMY PRESCHOOL
OFFICE BEFORE YOUR CHILD BEGINS SCHOOL**

I have received a copy of the Hebrew Academy Parent Handbook and understand that I must abide by the guidelines and expectations of the Hebrew Academy Preschool to ensure my child's continued enrollment in the program.

Name of Student: _____

Parent or Guardian

Date Signed

Parent or Guardian

Date Signed