



THE LEONARD AND SYRIL RUBIN

Early Childhood Center  
at the KAPLEN JCC on the Palisades

2024-2025

Family *B'rit*

This handbook is intended to serve as a  
*B'rit*, a covenant,  
between families and our school  
to ensure a meaningful and successful experience.

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[jccotp.org](http://jccotp.org)

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## A Welcome Note from Miriam Pedler

Shalom Families,

Welcome to the Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center (ECC). We are so honored to welcome you to our extended family – your home away from home. Within a very short period of time your child will be entering an independent school experience. The ECC provides a secure and loving place for growth and transition. We are here to enrich all children with a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is child-centered and structured to meet the needs of each child. Our program is infused with Jewish values and is designed for creative learning which will stimulate and challenge your child's curiosity and inquiry.

We are proud to have a highly qualified, experienced staff of teachers whose warmth, nurturing and exciting programming skills provide a wonderful educational experience. Here your child will blossom, grow and be given all the fundamental tools for life after preschool.

Please read this handbook carefully so that you will become more familiar with our ECC educational philosophy, policies and procedures. We value our *b'rit* (covenant) with each and every family. Our *b'rit* is a commitment to the partnership between home and school that truly enables children to thrive. Your participation plays an important role in enhancing the growth and development of your child's school experience.

We understand that choosing your child's early childhood education experience is one of the most important decisions that you will make. We welcome the opportunity to get to know you and your children and to help you nurture them, teach them, and share in their growth. We do not take lightly the trust and confidence you have placed in us in this most important role. We extend you a warm welcome to our school and look forward to developing an enriching and rewarding relationship by creating wonderful memories with your family and celebrating your child's growth and development.

## 1. Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center

### a. Philosophy

The Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center (ECC) at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades offers a warm child-centered environment rooted in Jewish tradition, where children can become confident, responsible, and successful learners. We strive to enrich each child's world through exposure to language arts, science, reading and math readiness, music, art, Judaic values, physical education, and swimming. Nurturing social interaction is an integral part of all programs. By learning through doing, each child establishes a strong sense of self and accomplishment.

### b. Our School

**We are a school that children are excited to come to each day!** Children in our school feel safe, secure, known, heard, and understood. They are nurtured and encouraged to try new things, to become independent and responsible, and to become critical thinkers and lifelong learners.

**We are a school with educators who are passionate about the work they do each and every day.** Our educators nurture the children so they can grow, learn, and reach their full potential. Our educators see each child as a whole child, getting to know them as an individual and respecting their thoughts and ideas.

**We are a school where families are active participants in their child's learning.** Families are partners and allies, supportive of the school's philosophy and curriculum. There is open communication between families and the school, and everyone's voice is heard.

**We are a school where administrators work together to create a friendly, warm, and welcoming environment.** The administrators continuously learn and work together to model the goals, mission, and vision of the school to inspire all those who are part of our community.

### c. Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on a combination of several components that include best principles, practices, and research in early childhood education, developmentally appropriate practice, progressive child development theories and philosophies, guidelines from NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children), educational inspiration from Reggio Emilia, Italy, and integration of secular and Jewish learning. We help children achieve their full potential by focusing on social, emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor, and language development.

Every classroom provides a supportive, nurturing environment that promotes the development of young children. We strive to provoke wonder, curiosity, intellectual engagement, and creativity within each child. Therefore, problem solving, experimentation, and social interactions are encouraged through daily use of developmentally appropriate materials and activities. These are driven by the age-related needs and interests of the children, and may include blocks, dramatic play, sensory experiences, art, cooking, music, movement, manipulatives, math, science, outdoor play, books, and language experiences. With support and guidance from educators, children are invited to use self-directed choices to move throughout these activities in the classroom.

Our classroom curriculum is inspired by developmentally appropriate educational models such as Creative Curriculum. Our objectives for development and learning align with the New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards, New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and we use an assessment tool aligned with those goals. Each objective falls under a different domain of learning and development – social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, the arts, and English language acquisition.

We embrace the JCC Association Sheva Center’s Early Learning Framework. The framework is comprised of seven core lenses and seven core elements, which help to outline a dynamic vision of excellence in early childhood Jewish education, and serve as a focal point for conversation and learning that inspire deeper listening, observation and decision-making in support of the construction of curriculum with young children. The lenses provide an ethical model for living and articulate the approach to our work. They are manifested daily in our classrooms – in the ways environments are structured, in the ways relationships are developed with children and families, and in the way we see the world around us. The elements are influenced by multiple philosophies of early education and the most recent and highly regarded research on children’s learning, brain development and an understanding of the needs of 21st century families.

Core Lenses:

*Masa*: Journey (Reflection, Return, and Renewal)  
*Tzelem Elohim*: Divine Image (Dignity and Potential)  
*D’rash*: Interpretation (Inquiry, Dialogue, and Transmission)  
*K’dushah*: Holiness (Intentionality and Presence)  
*B’rit*: Covenant (Belonging and Commitment)  
*Hit’orerut*: Awakening (Amazement and Gratitude)  
*Tikkun Olam*: Repair of the World (Responsibility)

Core Elements:

Children as Constructivist Learners  
Early Childhood Administrators as Visionaries  
Early Childhood Educators as Professionals  
Families as Engaged Partners  
Environments as Inspiration for Inquiry  
Discover: CATCH and Healthy Adult Engagement as *Sh’mirat HaGuf* (taking care of our bodies)  
Israel as a Key Component of Early Childhood Jewish Education

**d. State Licensing Info**

The Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades is licensed to operate by the State of New Jersey, Department of Children and Families.

2. Kaplen JCC on the Palisades

**a. Non-Bias Statement**

The Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades welcomes all families to our school and JCC community. We are committed to equal admission and educational opportunity for our children and their families as expressed in federal and state laws. Every member of the school and our community is of equal worth and importance, irrespective of creed, culture, class, race, gender, sexuality, and/or disability.

### **b. JCCOTP Mission/Vision/Values**

Deeply rooted in Jewish values and tradition, the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades is a vibrant home for the Jewish People that welcomes all and cultivates the social, intellectual, physical and spiritual well-being of the entire community. Our vision is to be the center point of Jewish life in our community and to engage all generations in our mission and values. We are committed to demonstrating the following values and ask respect for these values from those with whom we interact: community, connection to Judaism and Israel, integrity, quality, respect, responsibility, safety, and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world).

## 3. Required Paperwork

### **a. Registration, Application Fee, and Tuition**

Tuition rates are established annually, and are announced prior to the start of registration. Payment for tuition balance must be made by one of the following methods:

Tuition payment for the school year can be paid as following:

- 10 month programs can be paid in 10 installments using a credit card or checking account on the 25th of every month between July and April. Please note, there is a 3% non-refundable transaction fee if using a credit card.
- 12 month programs can be paid in 12 installments using a credit card or checking account on the 25th of every month between July and June. Please note, there is a 3% non-refundable transaction fee if using a credit card.
- All programs can be paid for in full by check on or before July 25 of the school year.

The Early Childhood Director, Business Director, or CEO must agree to any other arrangement in writing no later than July 25 of the school year.

Should your financial institution not honor an authorized payment, you are responsible for payment, plus a service charge of \$25, in addition to any other service fee charged by your financial institution. It is your responsibility to notify the JCC in writing immediately should your financial institution and or account information change. If you are two months or more in arrears on payments for Early Childhood Program, privileges are subject to suspension.

The Kaplen JCC on the Palisades is proud to be addressing affordability and access with our Financial Assistance Program. The goal of this program is to enable attendance at a Jewish early childhood program for families in need. Applications must be completed on an annual basis and decisions are based on the amount of funds available, number of applications received, and the level of need.

There are limited scholarships available. Families seeking assistance may request a Financial Assistance application from the ECC Office.

**The Jewish Right Start Program** is offered by the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey aimed at helping families make the decision to choose a Jewish preschool. Details, eligibility, and how to apply is available directly through them at <https://jfnj.org/young-families/> or (201)820-3902.

All students enrolled in the ECC for the 2024-2025 school year, as well as their siblings, have the option to register on a priority basis for the next year of school. There is a non-refundable registration fee due with your completed application. An incomplete child profile will result in a delayed start to the school year.

#### **b. School Forms**

Prior to the first day of school, the following forms must be completed on the school's online database platform.

- Medical Form
- Health History
- Copy of insurance card
- Immunization Record
- Universal Health Care Form
- NJ Required Parental Documentation Sign-Off
- Allergy Action Plan (if applicable)
- Asthma Action Plan (if applicable)
- Parent Handbook Sign-Off
- Getting to Know You and Your Child
- Transportation Information

These forms help us to get to know your child before school starts, and it also ensures that we have all pertinent information about your child as they begin school.

#### **c. Withdrawals/Refunds**

We want you to feel comfortable at our ECC. Should you decide to withdraw your child voluntarily, you may withdraw by July 1 prior to the start of the school year and receive a full credit/refund any tuition payments made. The registration fee will remain non-refundable.

If you choose to withdraw after July 1, a 30-day written notice is required. The registration fee will not be refunded, and you will be required to pay the tuition for the 30 days of notice.

If you are enrolled in a start date that is later than the first day of school, a 30-day written notice is still required. The registration fee will not be refunded, and you will be required to pay the tuition for the 30 days of notice.

#### **d. Membership requirement**

All families are required to be Kaplen JCC members to enroll in the Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center, which includes wonderful benefits. Membership affords the whole family access to endless enrichment and wellbeing opportunities, including our state-of-the-art fitness center, aquatics center, spa, and more.

New families joining the ECC, enrolling in full day or extended day programs receive a Kaplen JCC membership as part of their tuition for the first school year, and 50% of their membership fees for the second school year. New families enrolling in any partial day program receive a 50% of their membership fees included in their tuition for the first school year. (Membership is valid from September 2024-August 2025. Fees prorated based on start date and day length).



**e. Registration for a later start date**

Enrollment for a start date that is later than the first day of school prior to the start of the school year is accepted only for the Infant Program.

When enrolling for a later start date, the tuition will be prorated to the initial committed date. No additional pro ratings will be available if the committed start date is moved forward.

4. Preparing for School

**a. Schedule Options**

The following hours and options are available for the school year (see school calendar for program dates):

**INFANT PROGRAM:**

Monday-Friday, 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-August)

**TODDLER PROGRAM:**

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-August)

*NEW* Monday-Friday 8:45 - 3:30pm (September-June)

**TRANSITIONAL 2S PROGRAM:**

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 12 pm (September-June)

**TWO YEAR OLDS:**

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 12 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 3:30 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June + 8 weeks of NKSC)

**THREE YEAR OLDS:**

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 2 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 3:30 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June + 8 weeks of NKSC)

**FOUR YEAR OLDS:**

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 2 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am – 3:30 pm (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June)

Monday-Friday 8:45 am - 5 pm\* (September-June + 8 weeks of NKSC)

**MORNING CARE**

Monday-Friday 7:30 am - 8:45 am (September-June)

\*All school programs end at 5 pm on Fridays from September through mid-November, and mid-March through June. **All school programs end at 4 pm on Fridays from mid-November through mid-March, in observance of Shabbat.**

The extended day program tuition (8:45 am - 5 pm) for the 2s, 3s and 4s programs **does not** include vacation camp dates. If this program becomes available, registration and payment will be collected separately.

The extended day programming for the 2s, 3s and 4s programs **includes** 1 complimentary extracurricular class per semester. Registration for that class will be done by our office pending on spots available; further instructions will be sent after the school year starts.

If your student is enrolled in the 2s, 3s, or 4s program in the 10 month extended option, the deadline for switching to the extended 12 month program will be Jan 1. The request will need to be submitted in writing to the ECC office.

### **b. Meet your Educator**

Before school begins, all students, along with their parents, will be invited to a Meet and Greet. This offers an opportunity for children to familiarize themselves with their new teachers and begin to meet friends. The visits are set up in small groups and for a short period of time to pave the way for a smooth transition when school starts. Your child's teacher will send out more information about classroom visits by the end of August.

### **c. Separation**

Starting school is a significant milestone and a source of positive growth for everyone involved – children, parents, and teachers. Even if your child is excited about coming to school—for the first time OR as a returning student— every September is a new year, a new class, and a new experience for your child. All young children need the understanding and support of their families and teachers during this time.

We believe that separating from parents and caregivers is an important skill and we work to help children identify, express, and manage their feelings throughout the process. Establishing trust with the teachers and the environment enables children to become comfortable with the separation from their parents. To prepare a child for school, parents can talk about the teachers and friends who will be there, what goes on in school (such as playing, art projects, reading, singing, snack time, and more) and that mommy/daddy/caregiver always comes back when school is over!

We will supply all families with tools to aid in the separation process. These will include: in person “meet and greets” with the teachers and classmates, a social story to read with your child before school begins, and photos sent via Kaymbu so you can see your child's smiling face once the school year begins.

We hope this will help you to grow more comfortable too—separation is a major step for children and parents alike. Children take their cues from their parents both verbal and non-verbal, – it's important that you believe that your child is going to have a great day and that you trust his/her teachers to care for them. When you are feeling positive your child can sense it and they feel calmer and more at ease. Going to school is a wonderful new experience; one that requires support, love, kindness, and patience as a child learns to navigate this new

exciting stage in his or her life. We will happily and eagerly work with each child and family individually to ensure a smooth transition into school.

**d. Class Placements**

We make every effort to place children in classes that will maximize each child's growth and development, while balancing other factors for group dynamics, such as teacher recommendations, and knowledge of child development. We reserve the right to make a final placement decision based on each child's educational, developmental, and social-emotional needs and will not accept requests from parents.

5. The School Day

**a. Arrival and Dismissal**

The operational hours of school are 7:30 am – 5 pm all arrival will be carpool only and dismissal will be in person from the classroom. Please make every effort to have your child at school at their designated carpool time. When children are dropped off late, it can be extremely disruptive to the child's schedule and to the rest of the children in the classroom. Frequent late drop offs will not be permitted. Any drop off after carpool is over must be communicated to the school office and classroom teacher ahead of time.

Children must be promptly picked up after school at their dismissal time. If you are unable to make it on time, please notify the school office. Pickups that occur 5 minutes after a student's scheduled pickup time will result in a fee of \$10 per every 5 minutes.

If social arrangements are made for play dates or visits with relatives, or if someone other than the usual person will be picking up a child, the school must be informed in writing or by email so that the child can be released to the appropriate person. Children will not be released until arrangements are verified.

**b. Morning Carpool and Afternoon In-person Pickup**

Morning carpool will take place beginning at 8:45 am, based on location of classrooms. Afternoon pickup can begin 10 minutes prior to the program end (11:50am, 1:50 pm, 3:20 pm and 4:50 pm). As we get closer to the start of school, an email will be sent with carpool information, door codes and further details which will describe the procedures in more detail.

Please note that we are **not permitted** to accept a sleeping child of any age, and children must be awakened by parent/caregiver at drop off prior to be accepted by their educator or school delegate.

**c. Late Arrival and Early Pickup**

We understand that occasionally due to appointments, etc, there will be a need to drop off your child late or pick up your child early from school. Please follow the steps below to ensure a smooth and safe transition for your child.

Late Arrival:

- Please email your child’s teacher, **and** [earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org](mailto:earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org) with your child’s name, classroom and approximate drop off time.
- We cannot accept children during lunch/rest time. All late drop offs should occur before 11:00am.
- Call your child’s classroom when you arrive and a staff person will grant you access to drop your child off in their classroom.

**Early Pickup:**

- Please email your child’s teacher, **and** [earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org](mailto:earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org) the night before with your child’s name, classroom and approximate pick up time.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact [earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org](mailto:earlychildhoodcenter@jccotp.org) or 201-408-1435.

**d. Bringing Items from Home**

Young children frequently benefit from the security of a favorite item from home to help ease the transition to school, particularly during the early weeks of the school year or during special times of day, such as naptime. We invite children to bring such items into school, but ask that they remain in their cubby or backpack when not in use. They will be sent home weekly to be washed. Please label any items your child brings to school with his or her first and last name.

The JCC cannot be responsible for lost, missing, or broken possessions. Parents should only send in items that are replaceable and of limited monetary value—please refrain from sending handmade family heirlooms, expensive toys, jewelry, money or breakable, fragile, or irreplaceable items. Commercial action toys, guns and weapon-like toys, and weapons of any kind are never permitted in the building.

**e. Backpacks**

Each child should bring a backpack to school daily, labeled with his or her name. Educators will check the backpack daily for notes from parents, and parents should check for communication from educators. Please check your child’s backpack daily for important school information, children’s artwork, or other items. Please do not leave medications or other items that are unsafe for the classroom in your child’s backpack.

**f. Clothing**

Please send your child to school dressed in comfortable, washable clothes that can be easily and independently managed. Dress your child for active and messy play. Children are involved daily in arts and crafts activities and participate in cooking and science experiments, all of which may be messy. We do not want children to feel worried about getting their clothes dirty, and refrain from engagement, discovery, or other experiences throughout the school day. We want our children to be independent and do as much for themselves as possible. Sweatpants or leggings with elastic waists, sneakers with Velcro fastenings, tee-shirts, and other comfortable clothes and shoes that are safe for running and climbing and allow children to exhibit independence when dressing themselves.

Each classroom is scheduled for daily outdoor playtime, except when it is rainy, icy, or dangerously cold. There are some lovely snowy days when children can have a wonderful time playing outside, but they must have appropriate clothing. Please always be sure to dress your child for the weather.

All clothing, including mittens, hats, boots, and coats, should be labeled with the child's first and last name using a waterproof marker or tag. Any children who stay at school for rest time are invited to have a small blanket and/or a soft familiar toy, blanket, or "lovie" to make rest time cozy.

We recommend sending your child to school in sneakers every day, and sneakers are required on gym days. In the 3 and 4 year old programs, on swim days, children should come to school wearing a bathing suit under their clothes, and they should bring a towel or terry cloth robe, a bathing cap, along with underwear and a waterproof bag with handles for their wet clothing.

Please provide a complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and sneakers) for each child in a clearly labeled shoebox on the first day of school. If applicable, please also send in extra diapers and wipes. Please check your child's box periodically to be sure that the clothing is appropriate in terms of size and season. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last names.

#### **g. Lunch and Snacks**

Nutrition is an important aspect of our program as we prioritize *Sh'mirat HaGuf*, taking care of our bodies. Therefore, we strive to increase children's interest in a wide variety of foods and to promote good eating habits for optimal development. The school provides dry snacks throughout the day. All products served for snacks are peanut/tree nut free. We ask that you send in TWO "healthy" snacks for your child for mid morning and afternoon (for all programs ending later than 12 pm).

Children who stay for lunch should bring their lunch in an insulated bag clearly labeled with his/her name. Please send a well-balanced, nutritious lunch. In adhering with the JCC's rules of Kashrut, you may provide dairy or meat meals; but please do not mix milk and meat together, and please do not send any pork or shellfish products. We recommend foods like yogurt, cream cheese or jelly sandwiches, tuna fish, egg salad, string cheese, fruit, pudding cups, raisins, and other healthy snacks. A juice/milk box or thermos is fine, and we will provide water if you do not include a drink. Lunchtime is one of the many opportunities your child has to develop self-help skills. Please send easy to open containers and finger foods to encourage your child's independence.

**Please do not send nuts, nut products or products manufactured in facilities with nuts including peanut butter, or any items that are not Kosher.** Please refer to our allergy and Kashrut policies with any questions. Also, do not send any candy, popcorn, soda or glass bottles/containers to school with your child. Small round foods, such as grapes and cherry tomatoes must be cut into four pieces or quartered for those under 2 before being sent to school. We do not recommend sending raw carrots, hot dogs, raisins, craisins, and popcorn, as these may be choking hazards.

#### **h. Infant Feeding**

Our infant room happily supports both breastfeeding and formula feeding. We will accept, store, and serve breast milk in ready-to-feed containers labeled with your child's name and date. Breast milk can be kept in the refrigerator for 24 hours and in the freezer for 3 months. If your child is formula fed, please send in large containers of powdered formula and our educators will prepare bottles with filtered water. Whole milk is provided once children have transitioned off of breast milk or formula. Purees and other age-appropriate foods may also be sent in by parents and served by our educators. Each child must have an infant feeding plan that can be updated whenever needed.

#### **i. Nap and Rest Time**

In accordance with New Jersey State regulations, all preschool children under the age of four who attend an Early Childhood program for four or more hours a day must have a supervised nap or rest time. Parents are discouraged from picking students up during naptime, and drop offs are never permitted during this time.

Infants nap on their own schedules, and unless otherwise ordered by a physician with written documentation, are placed on their backs to sleep in a crib. Pillows, quilts, blankets, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed in cribs. This includes pacifiers with soft animals attached. Infants are allowed to use sleep sacks but they must have arm holes.

Toddlers nap on cots, and our students in the twos and older nap on mats. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a sheet or cover for the cot or mat, and these items will be sent home weekly and as needed for washing. Naptime for toddlers and twos is typically two hours, and quiet rest time is between 30-45 minutes in our threes and fours.

An appropriate naptime is created by providing a restful environment. This includes turning off lights, shading windows to outside sunlight, playing soft and relaxing music, or letting children snuggle with familiar objects. Individual attention to help a child to go to sleep will be given if needed. This includes appropriate touching such as rubbing a child's back or rocking a young infant or toddler. The rest areas are light enough to allow visual supervision at all times.

#### **j. Toilet Learning**

Toilet learning is different for all children, and our educators will happily work with families whose children are showing signs of readiness in learning to use the toilet. Toilet learning should be a non-stressful experience that is appropriate to each child's individual development and involves the child, parents, and teachers. It is important to develop a partnership between home and school to achieve this developmental milestone. Your child will be learning to use the toilet both at home and here at school, and they will have the best success if the expectations and practices are consistent in both places. Together, we can help children to become comfortable, confident, and successful while they learn toileting skills.

We will not force a child to use the toilet; however, we will encourage each child to try when and if they are showing signs that they need to use the toilet. Teachers will happily provide assistance in all areas of toileting, including wiping after urinating or having a bowel movement, or changing clothes after an accident. A child will never be scolded or punished for having an accident—accidents are part of the learning process and are handled in a calm and casual

manner. The child will be changed and encouraged to let the teachers know next time they need to use the toilet, and then quickly integrated back into the ongoing activities.

#### **k. Interdepartmental Programming**

Interdepartmental activities are an important part of our curriculum at the Leonard and Syril Rubin ECC. The children partner with our Special Services and Seniors department for opportunities to learn new skills and engage in recreational and educational activities that grow into loving and meaningful 14 relationships over time. There are four opportunities for regular interaction: our Grandfriends program, Seniors Shabbat, Special Friends, and Gardening.

Each class is paired with a Grandfriend from our Seniors department. The Grandfriend visits the room weekly and participates in class activities. The students love it when their Grandfriends read stories to them, sing, and even go to the playground with them.

On Fridays, each class takes turns visiting the seniors for an intergenerational Shabbat program in the Senior adult lounge. The children and the seniors sing songs, read stories, and enjoy saying the blessings for the Challah and grape juice and sharing a snack together.

Our gardening program invites children and seniors to work together in planting, harvesting, weeding, picking and cooking foods directly from our JCC garden. This program engages the children in hands-on experiences that teach responsibility and healthy eating habits. Our students are hearing new language, vocabulary, stories and learning about how to take care of themselves and others. Using the garden as an experiential classroom, our GrowTorah lessons explore the Torah relationships between humans, the earth, and our fellow creatures. These four core values learned through gardening align with our Sheva Center Early Learning Framework –

- Incubating *Emunah* (faith) and *Hit'orerut* (awakening)
- Cultivating compassion for all creatures and *Tzelem Elohim* (divine image)
- Stewarding the earth and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world)
- Reimagining *Tzedakah* and *K'dushah* (holiness)

These experiences offer our students the opportunity to learn from and interact with older adults and to receive unconditional love and attention. Some students may have grandparents who live far away, or may be unfamiliar with elderly adults. This program can build meaningful relationships by giving them a grand friend that is close by. For the seniors, this program can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and depression and helps give them a sense of purpose. For many of our children and many of the seniors, these interactions are the joy of their week.

#### **l. Enrichment Activities**

We offer many enrichment activities during the school week, including gym, creative movement, music, swim, Judaics, and Skills and Thrills. Your child's teacher will provide the class schedule for these activities.

The gym program is taught by our Health and Recreation department, specifically athletics. Each class, infants through the fours, participates in gym once a week. It consists of exercises, sports, movement education, active games, and gross-motor skill building. These activities are taught by a member of the athletic departments coaching team with assistance from each group's teacher. Children are required to wear sneakers for gym.

Our Creative Movement program is offered for our infants, toddlers, and twos. Creative Movement, taught by the JCC Dance School, is a positive experience for the “young at art.” Creative Movement is a joyful way for children to explore movement through music, develop physical skills, channel energy, and stimulate imagination to promote creativity. This class focuses on body awareness, motor fitness, rhythmic skill, strength, flexibility, coordination, endurance, and physical strength. In addition, props and imagination are used to learn music and dance concepts in a warm, caring environment.

The Thurnauer School of Music provides classes to the threes and fours. With fun and creativity, the children will learn to respond to great music, play musical games, explore instruments, and participate in dramatic play with music! These classes give children an opportunity to find their voice, develop their rhythmic skills, and learn to love all types of music. Using guitar and piano accompaniment, the teacher sings and moves with the class.

Children in the threes and fours programs are scheduled each week for a session of Instructional Swim. The swim program is taught by an instructor who is a member of our JCC Aquatics Team. It consists primarily of recreational use of the training pool. Each child receives limited individual instruction, during each swim session to maintain and increase skills. Children are taught by a licensed Water Safety Instructor who is assisted by one or two classroom teachers, depending on the number of children in the swim class. All children are required to wear a bathing cap which will be provided by the school. Students who are not well enough to participate in swim should remain at home.

## 6. Special Programs

### **a. After School Extracurricular Programs**

The JCC offers a variety of after-school classes throughout the year including arts, sports, swim, drama, dance, music and more. Please refer to [THIS LINK](#) to select what works best for you and your child.

### **b. Birthdays**

We enjoy celebrating children’s birthdays in school. Please check with your child’s teacher to arrange for a convenient time for a classroom celebration. It is our school tradition to bake special treats for each child’s birthday in class. Please do not send in goody bags, candy, or any home baked or purchased items.

There are lots of meaningful ways to celebrate your child’s birthday in the classroom! Here are a few ideas:

- Introduce a special tradition, song, dance, or game to your child’s class.
- Be a guest reader in the classroom on your child’s birthday.
- Donate a special book, puzzle, or toy to the classroom in honor of your child’s birthday. - Collaborate with the classroom educators to plan a special art project that reflects your child’s interests.

Please be sensitive and inclusive when planning birthday celebrations outside of school. Be aware that a birthday party planned for Shabbat (Saturday) or with food that is not kosher may limit participation of children in the class. We encourage that if more than half of the class is



invited, you should consider inviting the whole class to the birthday party. Birthday invitations, gifts, and thank you notes cannot be distributed at school.

**c. Shabbat**

On Fridays, each child will have the opportunity to invite their family in as Shabbat guests. The Shabbat guests will lead each class in the blessings over the candles, grape juice, and challah. Many families choose to continue their Shabbat celebrations at home, and through our partnership with Zadie's, children may sign up to bring home challah weekly. An email announcing annual challah costs and dates will be sent home at the beginning of the school year.

**d. Holidays**

We celebrate all Jewish holidays throughout the year, including: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover, Lag B'Omer, Yom Ha'atzmaut, and Shavuot. In addition to Jewish holidays, we celebrate Thanksgiving. While Christmas, Easter, Halloween, and Valentine's Day (as well as other non-Jewish holidays) are not celebrated at school, please be assured that a child's mention of any home celebration is always a welcome topic in the classroom and will be treated with interest and respect.

**e. Short Walks**

All of our students take short walks through the JCC and around the JCC property. These walks not only get the children talking and thinking new ideas, but they make the children feel more a part of this community as they learn the way around the building.

**7. Home/School Connections**

**a. Family/Educator Relationships**

The bridge between home and school is very important in a child's world. Home and school must be connected in positive and respectful ways to help children feel safe and secure. We value the family's role in the education of children and recognize the importance in building a partnership with families to work together to support children's healthy development and learning. Parents and teachers may look at young children's learning from different perspectives, but they share a common goal: making sure that children engage in meaningful experiences. The foundation for strong relationships is frequent and open communication, mutual respect, and building opportunities to discover what is best for each individual child. This happens in several ways, such as written and online communications, twice yearly Parent-Teacher Conferences and Parent Association (PA) events.

In order to maintain the warm, professional relationships that develop between parents and educators, we ask that all contact remain professional. Educators and parents are asked to use discretion when socializing outside of school. This includes but is not limited to social media, birthday parties and other social events.

**b. Communication**

One important way our educators build collaborative partnerships with parents is by communicating regularly about each child and about our school community. Direct and open communication between parents and the school is very important to us. Educators regularly send photos, videos, and blog posts through Kaymbu, an online communication platform.

Kaymbu allows educators to document and share the experiences children have during the school day, and therefore to give parents a window into their child's life at school. Each classroom is equipped with an iPad which will be specifically used for the Kaymbu program. If you see a teacher on what looks like a tablet, rest assured, they are only using the device to input information into Kaymbu! The security features of the Kaymbu software allows all information captured within Kaymbu to be private communication between our school and our families. No personal information is shared with any external parties and as a parent you will only receive information specifically about your child and his/her classroom.

Additionally, you will receive weekly school wide communications from the school via Constant Contact. Traditional e-mail will also be used by the school administration as needed to relay pertinent information. Kaymbu text alert is used in the event of time sensitive information, such as school closings, delayed start time and additional time sensitive messaging.

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that the school has up-to-date contact information, including 2-3 emergency contacts and that someone is reachable by the school at all times.

#### **c. Bi-Annual Conferences**

Conferences between parents and educators are held twice yearly. School is closed one day in the Fall and one day in the Spring for this purpose. These conferences provide an opportunity for parents and educators to meet and discuss each individual child's progress. The educators will discuss your child's development, his/her strengths and challenges, and any other areas that shed light on your child's experience in school, including friendships, favorite activities, and more. Each conference lasts between ten to fifteen minutes. One or both parents are encouraged to attend. We are happy to schedule conferences at other times on an as-needed basis, at the request of the parents or the school. We encourage in person conferences so that we can build and support the school/home relationship.

#### **d. Parent Association**

Our parents are an essential part of The Leonard and Syril Rubin Early Childhood Center and we encourage all parents to participate as our partners, advocates, and liaisons in one of the following committees:

- Mitzvah
- Chesed
- Book Fair
- Boutique
- Yearbook
- Social/Alumni

More information about the PA and how to get involved will come your way as the year begins to unfold. Please reach out to [RubinECCPA@jccotp.org](mailto:RubinECCPA@jccotp.org) with questions.

#### **e. Babysitting and Transporting Students**

The Kaplen JCC on the Palisades strongly discourages parents from hiring educators to provide babysitting or transportation services. Educators have a duty of professionalism both within and outside of our ECC. Staff and families who wish to arrange for babysitting outside of school hours should be aware of the following:

- The ECC must be made aware of any arrangements made with any ECC educator. Failure to do so may result in repercussions for both the staff member and the family.
- Babysitting may not occur within the Early Childhood space.
- Educators may not babysit for students who are in their class, unless the babysitting obligation was pre-existing.
- All communication regarding babysitting arrangements must be done outside of the educator's teaching hours.
- The ECC does not take responsibility for safety issues, conduct, grievances, or any other claims arising out of the educator's private arrangements outside of school hours.

## 8. Our Educators

### a. Our Team

We are proud of our more than 60 experienced and caring early childhood professionals, including a full time nurse. All lead educators hold New Jersey State teaching certification, a current Child Development Associate credential, or a degree in a related field, and many assistant teachers are working towards or have achieved these certifications. All educators are trained in infant/child CPR and first aid. We offer a wide variety of consultant services, including but not limited to a licensed social worker, child psychologist, speech language professionals and consulting pediatricians.

### b. Substitutes

Educator absences due to illness or vacation may result in a substitute teacher in the classroom. If an educator will be absent for an extended period of time, the school will notify parents with an update. Substitute teachers working with our children are carefully selected and screened to the same standards as all of our educators.

### c. Professional Development

We are dedicated to sustaining excellence in our school and in early childhood education through the preparation, support, and continuing growth of our professional educators. We provide ongoing professional development for all educators, including a full week at the start of the school year, and a day in the late fall, and regularly review our curriculum. Our educators and administrators are experienced and professional educators, and professional development invites opportunity for continued growth and excellence.

## 9. Policies

### a. Absences

On any day that your child will not be attending school when they are scheduled to, please email the [school nurse](#) and classroom teacher to report your child's absence. Refunds will not be given for absences of any kind. (vacation, sickness, or any other reason).

### b. Days off/Snow Days

School will be closed for major holidays (both religious and secular). In cases of emergency closure, we will do our best to announce any change in schedule no later than 6:45 am of the affected day. These changes will be necessary if our facility is not safe for our families and staff

and/or if staff that do not live in our area are delayed in severe traffic caused by extreme weather and a delayed opening is required.

Inclement weather closings will be posted on the homepage of the JCC website at [www.jccotp.org](http://www.jccotp.org). We will also have an automated system in place for emergency school closings. You will receive an email, and/or text message when there are situations requiring immediate communication, such as an early dismissal or closure due to inclement weather. Parents and guardians are responsible to ensure that their contact information is correct so that no important communication is missed.

Snow days, delayed openings, and early dismissals due to inclement weather are at the discretion of the JCC and ECC, with guidance from the Tenafly Police Department and local public schools.

### **c. Health**

#### **i. General Health Information**

We are fortunate to have a nurse on premises from 9 am - 5:15 pm every day to support the JCC. The nurse will be available to monitor illness, attend to injuries, and provide necessary examinations/treatments, if your child is feeling ill or sustains an injury. The nurse's goal is to provide a constant positive, warm, and healthy environment. Please note that it is important to discuss with the school nurse any allergies, ongoing medical conditions or hospitalizations for your child prior to and throughout the school year.

The Universal Child Health Record must be completed by your child's pediatrician. The physical examination for children who are 2 ½ years old or younger should be within the past six months prior to the beginning of school. Children, who are above 2 ½ years of age, should have had their exam within the past year and will need to be updated on an ongoing basis. Additionally, if your child has any Allergies, Asthma or any other ongoing conditions, please submit a special care plan. Please note that all required health documents must be completed accurately and submitted prior to the first day of school.

#### **ii. Current COVID-19 Protocol**

The ECC will follow the most current guidelines provided to us by the state and local Health Department and will abide by the regulations set forth by our licensing agency.

#### **iii. Vaccinations**

The ECC's Immunization policy requires that all children attending Nursery school must be up to date with their immunizations as per guidelines of The New Jersey Minimum Immunization Requirements for Child Care/Preschool Attendance. With the welfare of the entire school in mind, by implementing this policy, we are able to take the proper precautions to ensure that our student population is properly protected against preventable childhood diseases and follow the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The American Academy of Pediatrics and The U.S Department of Health & Human Services.

The New Jersey Minimum Immunization Requirements for Child Care/Preschool Attendance are as follows:

- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis)
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae type b)
- Flu Vaccine (yearly)
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- IPV (Polio)
- Pneumococcal (PCV, Pneumococcus)

The State of New Jersey has not required the COVID Vaccine at this time.

Religious exemptions will not be permitted by the school for the required childhood immunizations. If a parent requests a religious exemption for the Annual Flu vaccine only, this request will be reviewed on an individual basis by the school nurse and the school director with careful consideration. Medical Exemptions will be reviewed by the school nurse and the school director with medical consultation as necessary. Immunization compliance will be closely monitored by the school nurse on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. For infants and toddlers receiving ongoing vaccinations throughout the school year, there will be a required 24 hour period post vaccination to provide proof from your child's pediatrician so the health records can accurately be updated. If an immunization cannot be administered for medical reasons, parents must submit a written statement from a health care provider attesting to the reason the immunization cannot be given. The note should include a specific time period as to when the immunization can be given.

#### **iv. Lice Checks**

Head lice are insects that infest children's scalp hair and are known to cause itching. Lice are most likely spread by direct head-to-head contact between children. Throughout the year it is the parent's responsibility to inspect their child's hair for live lice and nits. In general, lice checks should be performed prior to the start of the school year, and after returning from a vacation. If lice are found, either at school or at home, the school nurse must be notified. The nurse will always notify other parents of the possible lice exposure in the classroom, while maintaining your child's anonymity. A child found to have lice will have to be treated, and must check in with the school nurse before returning to the classroom. A student must be free of nits and lice before being permitted to return.

#### **v. Medication**

Medication and health care procedures shall be administered only after receipt of written approval from the child's parent(s). The child's parent must complete a Medication Treatment Authorization form and submit it to the school nurse. Written approval must include:

- Name of the child
- Date and time medication will need to be administered
- Name of the medication/reason for the medication/dosage
- Parent's signature

Medication should be stored in its original prescription container, which has been labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication and expiration date, the date

it was prescribed and directions for its administration by the pediatrician. Parents should not send medication to school unless necessary. Nonprescription medicine can only be administered with a doctor's note (Antihistamines, Cough suppressants, Decongestants, Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen).

#### **vi. Illnesses**

Parents should carefully screen their child before sending them to school. Please do not send your child to school if he/she isn't completely healthy. Remember that a quiet day at home may prevent an illness of longer duration and will also help in preventing other staff members and children from possibly becoming sick. If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend school. If such symptoms occur at school, the child will be taken to the nurse's office, and parents will be called to take the child home. Children must be picked up within 30 minutes of parent notification.

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea (twice the child's usual frequency) within a 24 hour period
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting within a 24 hour period
- Elevated temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Lethargy
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) with pus and redness in one or both eyes.
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Severe coughing
- Open mouth sores
- Stiff neck
- Flu-like symptoms, which may include fever, cough, headache, sore throat, achiness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, and fatigue
- Complaints of a sore throat or a strep infection that has not been treated with antibiotics for over 24 hours

A child must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications before returning to school. A doctor's note is required upon return for any visit related to illness, or prior to returning to school following a 3 day absence due to illness.

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease may not return to the center without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others. If a child is exposed to any excludable disease at school, parents will be notified in writing without the child's name being exposed. These diseases include but are not limited to respiratory, gastrointestinal, and contact illnesses such as:

#### Respiratory Illnesses:

- Chicken Pox
- German Measles
- Haemophilus Influenzae

- Measles
- Meningococcus
- Mumps
- Strep Throat
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping Cough
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie)

Gastro-intestinal:

- Giardia Lamblia
- Hepatitis A
- Salmonella Shigella

Contact Illnesses:

- Impetigo
- Lice
- Molluscum Contagiosum
- Scabies
- Shingles
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

The Department of Health’s Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work-Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide, a complete list of reportable excludable communicable diseases, can be found at:

[https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable\\_disease\\_magnet.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf).

**d. Allergies**

We are a peanut and tree nut **aware** school. Please do not send any foods to school that contain peanuts or tree nuts, including, but not limited to: almond milk, Honey Nut Cheerios, peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, baked goods containing peanuts or tree nuts, and foods containing nut sauces or flavoring to be eaten as lunch in the classroom, treats for Shabbat or celebrations in the classroom, or snacks anywhere else in the building—either before or after school. Please check granola and similar snack bars. Many include peanuts or tree nuts as ingredients or may be processed on the same equipment or in the same facility as products with peanut or tree nuts. None of these products will be permitted in school. Please note that because our building is a multi-use facility, the school cannot guarantee parents or guardians of students with peanut or tree nut allergies that they will not come into contact with peanuts, tree nut products or products manufactured in facilities with nuts, while at school.

Families must be sensitive to and respectful of the needs of all of the children in their child’s class. A child with an allergy can suffer a life-threatening, anaphylactic reaction by ingesting a food containing ingredients to which they are allergic. This can also happen if an allergic child has touched something with peanut traces and then put their hands in their mouth or touched their eyes. We appreciate all nursery school parents’ understanding and expect them to comply with these critically important guidelines. Please make sure that your child washes his or her hands and face with soap and water thoroughly before leaving home to come to school in the morning.

Keep in mind that simply removing nuts from a food does not make it safe to eat. Tree nuts are being added to an increasing variety of foods such as barbecue sauces, cereals, crackers, and ice creams. Labels must be checked every time.

Allergies to other foods (including but not limited to eggs, dairy products, soy, seeds, fruits, fish, or gluten) will be handled on a case-by-case basis in that child's classroom. Certain restrictions may be placed on all the children in that classroom (in addition to the prohibition on peanuts and tree nuts described above.)

Cooking is an important element of the curriculum in our classrooms. If your child has serious food allergies, please work with your child's teachers to check ingredients, supply safe recipes when applicable, and substitute safe ingredients for the class when necessary. The classroom teachers are prepared to work with you in this regard.

If your child has a food allergy and needs an EpiPen and other allergy-related medication:

- Please supply us with: TWO EpiPens, other allergy-related medication, instructions for using the EpiPens and other allergy-related medication, and a written medication consent form from your doctor.
- The EpiPens and other allergy-related medication must be placed in clear plastic zip-lock bags with your child's name clearly labeled on the front of the bag.
- Your child's EpiPens and other allergy-related medication will be stored in the classroom backpack, which is carried by the classroom teachers and accompanies your child every time he/she leaves the classroom.

**In order to ensure their safety, students with medical or allergy requirements must have all related medication and associated paperwork from their physician or allergist to attend school.**

#### **e. Kashrut**

The JCC observes the laws of Kashrut and, therefore, ALL FOOD brought into the building must be Kosher-style. All food shared with your class must be Kosher. Any packaged food must be marked with Kosher symbols. When sending in food for your child, you may provide dairy or meat meals; but please do not mix milk and meat together, and please do not send any pork or shellfish products. Any baked goods must be Rabbinic Council of Bergen County (RCBC) approved. We recommend the following bakeries:

- Zadi's in Fairlawn
- Butterflake in Teaneck
- Stop and Shop in Teaneck
- Shop Rite in Englewood

Please ensure that any products brought into school are Kosher and are also nut-free.

#### **f. Cleaning, Sanitization and General Operating Precautions**

The following procedures will be followed:

- Surfaces and classroom equipment/toys will be wiped down and sanitized continuously throughout the day.



- Toys will be cleaned after use throughout the day.
- All faucets in the bathroom and classrooms, toilet handles, door knobs, draw pulls and garbage can lids will be sanitized as needed.
- Staff will wash their hands and the children's hands before and after each activity. Every child will be assisted in washing correctly each time, regardless of their age.
- Bedding and soft "lovies" will be sent home weekly for washing and sanitizing. Please make sure you send these back cleaned each day.

#### **g. Social Media**

It is our policy to ensure the privacy, safety and well-being of our students, families, and staff. Please do not post pictures on social media of our school's children without permission from their families. This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. YouTube)

Please note that per our nursery school application, unless otherwise noted, photographs and videos may be taken of your child that could be used for future publicity and marketing purposes.

#### **h. Emergency Procedures**

**Fire Drills:** It is mandated by the State of New Jersey and the town of Tenafly to have regularly scheduled fire drills throughout the year.

**Lockdown Drills:** In accordance with Tenafly Police Department and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing, we have at least two lockdown Drills during the school year.

Our fire drills and lockdown drills assist the children to understand and remember what to do in case of a real emergency. During these drills, the teachers proceed as if it is a real emergency. During a fire drill, we help the children to quickly and quietly evacuate the building to the back of our playground area in each wing, and during a lockdown drill, we help the children to quickly and quietly move into our classroom bathrooms. In addition to the aforementioned drills, we also occasionally will hold "Shelter in Place" drills, in which the classroom doors are locked and children and educators stay in their room, but continue engaging in all activities. After any drill, we emphasize the "practice" nature of the drill and acknowledge the children's efforts in learning how to stay safe. Please reinforce these concepts at home. If you are at the JCC during a drill, please comply with the requests of early childhood or security staff. Do not remove your child from his or her group until the evacuation drill is complete. In the event of a real emergency during the school day, you will be informed as soon as possible via our automated alert system. The health and safety of all of our children is our first priority.

#### **i. Security**

The JCC provides security services for our school and the entire JCC, through both a private security company and the Tenafly Police Department. There is security on site during all school hours. The children get to know each security officer and can often be found greeting the officers while walking through the halls. In addition to overall building security, the guards'

responsibilities include supervising the grounds, traffic management at carpool times, supervising hallways during dismissal times, and participating in fire drills and lockdown drills. Please follow the security officers instructions at all times to help maintain safety and security at our school and JCC.

## 10. Discipline and Behavior

### **a. Positive Guidance and Discipline**

Our approach to guiding children' behavior is one of respect and support. We work to create an environment that teaches children to behave in a responsible manner and establishes a foundation for mutual respect. Young children are in the process of learning how to communicate with others and express their feelings. Often behaviors that are viewed as undesirable are a communication from a child about something that they want or need. Our goal is for children to develop increasing self-control, self-confidence, and to form satisfying relationships with peers and other members of the community.

We believe in using positive discipline techniques to encourage cooperation, limit-setting, self-regulation, and self-esteem building through the use of positive reinforcement, redirection, and setting clear expectations. Harsh language and loud voices will never be used while redirecting or discussing a situation with a child, and physical punishment of any kind is strictly prohibited. Discipline is a positive learning experience for children, not a punishment. We believe in assisting children to identify feelings and use language to process through challenging situations.

Discipline means changing behavior, which we aim to do with love, gentleness, praise, and encouragement. A teacher will help to model consideration, patience, and helpfulness for all of the children in the class, and work to develop trust between not only the teacher and the child but also the teacher and the parents. While most behavior concerns are dealt with in the classroom, the Early Childhood Director and supervisors are frequently involved to provide additional guidance and support for the child.

Please refer to the full discipline policy provided to and signed by all families at registration.

**b. Biting**

The NJ Child Care Department of Licensing requires that all centers maintain a safe and healthy environment for the children in their care. To that end, we have developed a policy on biting that promotes a positive and safe environment for all our children as well as for their families. At the Leonard and Cyril Rubin Early Childhood Center we recognize that biting is a natural part of a child's development. It is also unfortunately a topic that tends to provoke strong feelings in the parents of both the child that was bitten and the parents of the biter. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents as well. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for a child to do, we also know that children bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems but rather to environmental (child was too close to another, feeling overwhelmed, transition time in room) or social emotional learning (sharing, motor planning, personal space). Understanding this, our program does not focus on punishment but on effective techniques that address the specific reasons for the biting. When a biting incident occurs, we have several steps that are followed:

**For the biter:**

1. Our educators express to the children that they disapprove of the biting.
2. The child is immediately removed from the area where the incident occurred.
3. A teacher speaks to the child at the appropriate level and reminds them of the classroom rules on biting. "We don't bite our friends", "You seem upset,", "Ouch, Biting Hurts".

Our staff works hard each day to keep the children safe and to help the child who bit to learn more appropriate ways to navigate their emotions. We do not and will not use measures known to be harsh and ineffective i.e. time out, expulsion from program, removal from room, or biting the child back.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. Biting is always documented on our standard JCC Accident report and kept on file. It is signed by the classroom staff or witness to the incident as well as by our school nurse. If there is an ongoing issue with biting, we develop a written plan with specific strategies, techniques and timelines to work on the issue. This written plan will be shared with the families affected by the biting incidents.

**For the child that was bitten:**

We give immediate attention and first aid if needed to the child that was bitten. Our first concern is for them and their health and wellbeing. The child's parent will be notified via a phone call that their child was bitten. If a bite breaks the skin, we recommend a child is picked up and taken to a health care provider. Please note we will not reveal the identity of the child that bit, this is done to protect the child from being labeled as a "biter" and to allow the educators the time they need to observe behavior, develop and implement a plan to stop the biting.

We encourage all parents to go to our educators and administrative staff with their concerns and frustrations. We are always available to you and are happy to provide more information on

biting and why children bite. Together we can help children to learn more appropriate behaviors and keep all the children safe.

**c. Consultation**

Our school works with consultants who are highly trained and experienced professionals in the fields of education, speech and language, occupational therapy, child development and parenting. At the request of a parent or educator, we will arrange an observation or meeting with the Child Success Center.

If you have arranged for your child to have speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc. during school hours, please let the Early Childhood director know. We will help you in facilitating the services. In addition, please let us know if your child sees consultants or specialists outside of school, so we can partner with these professionals and best support each child.

**d. Individualized Student Assistance**

We support the integration of highly trained professionals, shadows, or SEIT's (Special Education Itinerant Teacher) for children who are in need of individualized assistance. As part of our policies, we ask parents who use shadows or SEIT's to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The parents are the sole employers of the support educator and are responsible for all scheduling, financial arrangements and payments to the support educator. The parents are responsible for introducing the support educator to the Early Childhood Director, Program Supervisor, and classroom educators.
2. Prior to beginning duties at the JCC, the support educator must completely fill out all school forms and paperwork to fulfill JCC and State of New Jersey standards.
3. The Leonard and Syril Rubin ECC at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades retains the right to request a termination of the support educator's services if deemed necessary for the wellbeing of the student or the school at any time.
4. If the child is unable to attend school or in the event of a school closing on any given day, it is the responsibility of the parents to inform the support educator.
5. If for any reason the support educator is unable to be at school, the parents must contact the Early Childhood Director to coordinate arrangements for the day.
6. The parents must give written permission for the child to be dismissed to the support educator.
7. If it is recommended that a child have a support educator after the start date of the program, it is the parent's responsibility to find an appropriate educator or an agency that provides those services.
8. Students that require a SEIT during school hours must attend with their shadow unless prior authorization has been obtained.

**e. Expulsion Policy**

The state of NJ mandates an expulsion policy for all licensed preschools in our state. We will do everything to work with your family in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to terminate or suspend a child from the center:

Parental Actions For Child's Expulsion:

- Failure of parent to pay/habitual lateness in payments.

- Failure to complete required forms or providing a copy of the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness of picking up your child.
- Noncompliance with school policy.
- Failure to provide or seek supplemental support when the school or district determines that it is necessary.
- Physical or verbal abuse to staff. This will result in immediate expulsion

#### Child's Actions For Expulsion:

- Failure of a child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.
- Child is a danger to him/herself or others.

#### Proactive Actions to Avoid Expulsion:

- Educators will redirect children from challenging behavior, always using positive methods and praising appropriate behavior.
- Educators will reassess classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, and supervision.
- Educators will use consistent methods of redirection.
- Child's behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality, and communication will be sent home to the family describing behaviors in detail.
- Parents and Educators will meet for conferences and develop action plans to support the child's needs.
- Recommendation of evaluation by Child Success Center or local school district child study team.

If the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's family will be advised verbally and in writing about the behavior warranting expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center. This written communication will include:

- The length of the expulsion period.
- Expected behavioral change required in order for the child or family to return to the center.
- A specific expulsion date that allows the family an adequate amount of time to seek alternate child care (usually one to two weeks notice depending on the other children's safety).
- Failure of the child/family to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

We will not expel a child based on the following:

- If a parent made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements (877-667-9845).

- If a parent reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center (800-215-6853 or 800-792-8610, after 5 pm).
- If a parent questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the family an adequate amount of time to make other child care arrangements, unless the child/family is in immediate danger to others.

## 11. Contact Information

### a. Educator Contact Information

Classroom educators can be primarily reached at their email address, which is their first initial and last name, @jccotp.org. (For example – Joe Smith is [jsmith@jccotp.org](mailto:jsmith@jccotp.org)). You may also call the Early Childhood office at 201-408-1431 or the JCC Front Desk at 201-569-7900 ext. 446 to be connected to your child’s classroom via phone.

### b. Administrator Contact Information

Our Early Childhood Administrative Team can be reached at the following phone numbers and email addresses:

Miriam Pedler - Early Childhood Center Director- [mpedler@jccotp.org](mailto:mpedler@jccotp.org) , 201-408-1430

Adyna Rosen – Early Childhood Center Assistant Director & Camp Katan Director - [arosen@jccotp.org](mailto:arosen@jccotp.org), 201-408-1437

Liz Levin - Program Supervisor - [elevin@jccotp.org](mailto:elevin@jccotp.org), 201-408-1433

Yaara Vered - Business Director – [yvered@jccotp.org](mailto:yvered@jccotp.org) , 201-408-1438

Carly Shurba - Administrative Assistant - [cshurba@jccotp.org](mailto:cshurba@jccotp.org), 201-408-1435

Philyss Seidenfeld - Nurse – [nurse@jccotp.org](mailto:nurse@jccotp.org), 201-408-1434

Aliza Lisker - PJ Library Coordinator - [alisker@jccotp.org](mailto:alisker@jccotp.org), 201-408-1432