

celebrate

discover

explore



SHIRLEE
GREEN
PRESCHOOL

AT CONGREGATION SHAARE EMETH

where Jewish journeys begin

SHIRLEE GREEN PRESCHOOL

AT CONGREGATION SHAARE EMETH

PARENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018

5777-5778

Karen Lucy, Director of Early Childhood Engagement

314-569-0048

www.preschool.sestl.org

klucy@sestl.org

August 2017

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Shirlee Green Preschool at Congregation Shaare Emeth. It is our privilege to be a part of your child's education and we are committed to provide the tools necessary for each and every child to reach their potential and discover their creativity and talents. We are truly committed to working in partnership with you and your child to provide the highest quality Jewish early childhood experience.

Please keep this Parent Handbook for your reference during the school year. We have included pertinent policies and procedures, information about our morning and afternoon enrichment program, an overview of our philosophy and curriculum and other general information about our school. Please review this handbook and feel free to contact us if you should have any questions.

Congregation Shaare Emeth has been proud to offer our outstanding Preschool for more than fifty years. We look forward to another outstanding year of the best in early childhood education for your child.

Shalom,

Karen Lucy, Director
Shirlee Green Preschool

MISSION

Our mission at Shirlee Green Preschool is to encourage young learners to grow at their own individual pace as they develop socially, spiritually, physically and cognitively in a Jewish environment.

PHILOSOPHY

Shirlee Green Preschool provides an interactive play-based environment, rich in Jewish values and customs. We use a Constructivist philosophy, guided by developmentally appropriate practice and believe that it is through play that children focus on their interests and make meaning of the world. Our faculty is committed to creating a safe and loving atmosphere and to nurturing a child's creativity and positive self-image.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our goal is for each child to develop an interest and joy in learning and a feeling of security, success and responsibility. Our overall learning objective is for our children to learn through play. Transitional expectations are presented for staff and children's viewing for success in all learning environments. We stress individuality and the development of the whole child.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: This area involves the emergence of a child's thinking skills and ability to understand concepts. To enhance these skills and concepts, we provide creative and imaginative experiences. We utilize educational toys and games as well as hands-on science, math and literature.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: Our objective for motor skills is to build positive self-esteem in a non-competitive atmosphere, to structure a child's inherent desire for movement, to release energy, to communicate and to strengthen his/her body.

GROSS MOTOR: We provide large motor experiences utilizing climbing and balancing equipment. The Outdoor Kitah and other movement areas help our children learn body awareness and a sense of space.

FINE MOTOR: Our fine motor experiences include the use of manipulatives such as pegs, lacing cards and Legos. We also provide creative experiences that emphasize cutting, gluing, drawing, painting and other pre-writing skills.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: We encourage appropriate ways for children to interact with both peers and adults. Each child's communication is enhanced through activities that include following directions, listening and self-expression through language. We provide children with a sense of empowerment and self-confidence.

SCREENINGS: Your child will be screened at least once each year. Screening is a quick and effective way to look at your child in comparison with other children his/her age. It can determine whether or not your child is developing within the normal range for his/her age. Screening is not an IQ test and does not measure intelligence.

JUDAIC DEVELOPMENT: We share our Jewish heritage and identity with the children in order to develop an awareness and love of Judaism through art, music, literature and prayer. Our curriculum includes a weekly Shabbat celebration and special activities at Jewish Holidays. Our children have many opportunities to interact with our Rabbis and Cantor.

OVERVIEW OF MORNING PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS 2012-2013

Baby N Me: Ages 6 weeks to 24 months with parent or caregiver

As parents and caregivers, we want to nurture our young children and offer them every opportunity possible to learn and grow. Baby 'n Me is our first step in nurturing your child's development.

During this class, your baby or young toddler can play with other children his or her age while exploring music, movement and other fun activities. As a parent or caregiver, you will meet other parents and caregivers and learn ways to nurture your child. Past featured topics have included car seat safety and baby massage!

Free Class

K'TANIM "Little Ones" (Infant Room): As young as 6 weeks

M'TUKIM "Sweet Ones": Up to 2 years old

GINNAH "Garden": 2 - 3 YEAR OLDS. (Child turns 2 by August 1, 2017)

TZIPPORIM "Birds": 3-4 YEAR OLDS. (Child turns 3 by August 1, 2017)

CHAVERIM "Friends": 4 - 5 YEAR OLDS (Child turns 4 by August 1, 2017)

AFTERNOON ENRICHMENT AND PRE AND POST CARE PROGRAMS

PRE-CARE - 7:00 A.M. - 9:00 A.M. is offered five mornings a week.

LUNCH BUNCH – 12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

AFTERNOON ENRICHMENT - 12:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. Pick up for Afternoon Enrichment Programs is at 3:00 p.m.

AFTERNOON ADVENTURES - 3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. is offered five afternoons a week.

SUMMER PROGRAMS: Preschool offers a wonderful summer camp experience. Camp Micah is a twelve-week camp that is available to preschool aged children.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Communication: Shirlee Green Preschool utilizes the app Brightwheel. Brightwheel, can be downloaded to your smartphone, and grants you access to your child's day, with images, messages, and easy communication with the staff in your child's classroom. Please note, while your child's information is private (only those assigned to your child can see any information relating to your child), messages through the app are not private. All staff see all messages. If you are relaying any details pertaining to your account or private information relating to your child, please contact the office at 314.569.0048 or kbrown@sestl.org / klucy@sestl.org.

CLOTHING: Dress your child for play. Your children will benefit if you dress them for play and in clothes that he or she can learn to handle. We encourage a child to learn independence at potty time, and buckles, belts or bib overalls can be difficult for little fingers. Also, please keep in mind that sandals or shoes with slick bottoms present problems when it comes to climbing on the indoor or outdoor equipment.

We ask that you send an extra set of clothing with your child including socks, shirt and pants. It is extremely important for you to label everything that you send to school with your child. Children often do not recognize their coats, particularly as the seasons change.

Please leave umbrellas at home or in the car. If you bring your child in the building with an umbrella, please take it back to the car with you. We will have umbrellas to keep the children dry as we load or unload the cars. Children's umbrellas often do not fit in the cubbies or cause other items in cubbies to get wet.

CHILD PLACEMENT: We adhere to the State of Missouri cut-off date of August 1 each year. Occasionally we find it necessary to re-evaluate a child's placement during the school year. If the situation arises in which a change is necessary, parents are consulted and a joint decision is made in the best interest of the child.

ABSENCES: Please contact the Preschool Office if your child is not attending school on any given day.

"POTTY" POLICY: As your children progress in their self-help skills and toilet training, please communicate with your child's teachers so that we can be a part of the "team" helping your child's success. The expectation is that by the end of their T'zipporim year, children are diaper/pull-up free. All preschoolers entering the Chaverim year are required to be toilet-trained.

BUILDING SECURITY: The building is kept locked at all times. To enter, press the bell outside the Main Preschool Entrance. **Please do not hold the door open for someone you do not know.**

SNOW DAYS: Due to the number of school districts that we accommodate, we do not go by any specific district's Snow Day decision. We will determine whether school is to be cancelled based upon the conditions of the roads and/or our parking lot. We use an automated call system to notify you by 6:00 a.m. of school closure. You may also check with KSDK Channel 5.

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR: We acknowledge the safety, welfare and healthy social development of our children as our primary concerns. As we respect the dignity and individuality of each individual child, we encourage other children to do the same.

Our staff directs and encourages children to solve their problems independently. With assistance from their teachers, the children learn to use words and discuss feelings to settle disputes. We encourage and acknowledge positive and acceptable behavior while allowing the children many free choices and freedom of movement. We are consistent in our rules and expectations.

Should inappropriate behavior occur on the part of an individual or group, the behavior and its consequences are discussed. We actively teach cause and effect and recognition of others' feelings. Verbal praise and other positive reinforcement techniques are an important part of our program. We also help children learn self-regulating skills.

BITING POLICY:

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children experience. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the preschool is our primary concern. The preschool's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. As toddlers are developing their verbal skills they can become impulsive without a lot of self-control. Shirlee Green Preschool will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become frustrated. The staff will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children.

SGP has adopted the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support strategies and techniques as the basis for handling classroom management and behavior problems. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at the preschool:

- *the biting will be interrupted with a firm, "Teeth are for eating!"
- *staff will stay calm and will not overreact
- *the bitten child will be comforted
- *staff will redirect the biter
- *the affected area of the bitten child shall be assessed, cleansed with soap and water, and a cold boo-boo pack placed on the bitten area
- *parents of both children should be notified by email
- *confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained
- *the bitten area should continue to be observed by the staff

INJURY/ACCIDENT GUIDELINES: Although every attempt is made to avoid them, accidents and injuries do occur at Preschool. Most teachers have been trained in CPR for Infants and Children as proscribed by the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

ILLNESS: Please do not send your child to school when he/she is not feeling well and unable to participate. We insist that parents keep children home when they show any sign of illness and until they are free of fever (without the aid of medication), vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours. This will assist in preventing the spread of germs. If a teacher has concerns about a child's health, the child will be removed from the classroom and the parents will be contacted.

In case of an accident or injury the teacher and the director will make a determination as to the severity of the injury. Minor scrapes and bruises are handled in the office. Our policy is to clean scrapes/cuts with soap and water.

In the case of more serious bumps or cuts, the teachers will contact the child's parent via phone to determine a course of action. If the school is unable to reach a parent and it is the judgment of the staff that the child needs immediate attention, the school will contact either the child's doctor or 911 to have the child transported to the nearest hospital. In case of a life-threatening emergency, the teacher will call 911 first and then contact the parent(s).

All accidents and injuries are documented on the Brightwheel app. Contact the teachers for additional information.

Permission for emergency treatment is kept in the child's file. Written records of parent and other emergency phone numbers are kept in an Emergency File Box. It is extremely important that parents keep emergency information up-to-date -- particularly the cell phone numbers.

FOOD ALLERGIES: With the prevalence of food allergies, we have adopted the following procedures:

1. Parents are asked to notify us of any or all food allergies or food intolerances.
2. A "*Food Allergy Action Plan*" form, medication form and a "*Permission to Administer Medication*" form must be completed for children with food allergies.
3. Teachers will review labels of all snacks sent to school by other parents. Children with allergies should have a supply of safe snacks in the classroom at all times.

LICE: Pediculosis, or head lice infestation, is a recurring problem in children. Recommendations by the Missouri Department of Health and the National Pediculosis Association have resulted in the adoption of a "no nit" policy in order to reduce the risk of transmission to and re-infestation of others in our school setting.

When a case of head lice is reported in our building, we immediately follow a protocol that includes notifying parents as well as removing pillows, dress-up clothes, stuffed animals, etc.

At all times, it is the responsibility of the parent to perform periodic lice checks on their own children.

CHILD/FAMILY ORIENTATION: At the beginning of each school year, the children and parents are invited to an In-Take Conference to "Meet the Teachers" Day program that introduces them to the teachers and the program. Additionally, parents are invited to an all-school Open House which is held the Sunday of the first week of Preschool. The Open House allows both parents to meet the teachers, discuss the program and the curriculum and meet other parents. Any child who joins our program after the beginning of the school year is invited to visit his/her classroom prior to beginning attendance. Parents of students who join the school during the year will receive orientation to the program from the Teachers and/or the Director.

AVAILABLE TO PARENTS: Many records kept by the preschool are open to parents at any time upon request. These records include: Teacher's Child Abuse and Neglect record checks, Teacher's Criminal Background checks, materials required for Missouri Voluntary accreditation,

and information regarding child: staff ratios and children's developmental records (available only to the custodial parent).

PHOTOS: We take photos of our preschoolers frequently. On occasion, we will include these photos in articles for our bulletin, Facebook, the *Jewish Light*, and even the *Post-Dispatch*. Photos may also be used (without names) on Congregation Shaare Emeth's website or in its on-line "*Shaare Mail*" communication. If you do not want us to include your child's photo in any of the afore-mentioned situations, please contact the Preschool Office @ 314.569.0048.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES: Children may be brought to their classrooms between 8:50 – 9:10 a.m. Please have your child in his/her classroom by 9:10 a.m.

Arrival: You may park in the South Lot and walk children into the building through the main Preschool Entrance or pull into the carpool line (also at the main Preschool Entrance). We will help your child(ren) out of the car, ON THE CURB SIDE ONLY. Parents/caregivers should not get out of the car in the carpool lane. Carpool Greeters will be available from 8:50—9:10 am. and will see that children get to their classrooms.

Dismissal: At dismissal times (Noon, 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m.), the teachers will bring the children to your car. If picking up after 3:00 p.m., please come into the preschool office. We strongly urge that you seat belt and secure children in their car seats prior to moving your car. Details of carpool procedures will be given to you prior to the beginning of school. In order to provide a safe environment for all, please adhere to these procedures.

For the safety of all, we request that all parents go through the carpool line at dismissal. Your cars will be identified by the last name card that are to be placed in your front windshield. These carpool cards will be provided to you prior to the beginning of school.

Early Dismissal: For your child's safety, please stop by the Preschool Office to pick up your child. If someone other than a parent picks up your child, we must have your authorization. Proper identification will be requested from such a person.

Late Fee: Parents arriving 15 minutes after scheduled pick up time will be charged a prorated fee of \$10.00 per hour for each 15 minutes they are late.

PARENT/STAFF CONFLICT RESOLUTION: It is our intention to avoid problems or misunderstandings through good communications. However, there is always potential for problems or misunderstandings. Any conflicts between staff and parents need to be handled as quickly as possible. Parents not comfortable contacting the staff person directly to resolve any concerns should feel free to contact the Director.

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC): If you have a child in the Preschool, you are a member of the PAC! PAC members play an integral part in our programs and assume many important roles such as sponsoring parent education programs and special children's activities, fundraising and advising the Director on programs and policies. The PAC meets each month; EVERYONE IS WELCOME. Through PAC you may volunteer to help out during class activities. The staff and the children always appreciate participation by parents.

FUNDRAISING AND SPECIAL FUNDS: Please consider celebrating life cycle events by making a tax-deductible contribution to any of the following funds from which our preschool benefits:

Shirley Solomon Play Yard Fund
Anthony B. Lake Scholarship Fund
Audrey Montague Preschool Fund
Lisha Gayle Enrichment Fund
Shirlee Green Preschool Fund
Marshall C. Weisman Fund for Preschool Special Needs Children
Marty and Kathy Zigler Endowment Fund for Preschool

CELEBRATIONS

SHABBAT: We strive to instill in our children a love for our Jewish Heritage and a strong sense of Jewish identity by sharing wonderful experiences together in celebration. All classes celebrate Shabbat. We incorporate special activities to make Shabbat a day which stands out from the ordinary. Our Shabbat Celebration is also highlighted with special guests (including the Rabbis, Cantor and/or a storyteller). **Please have your child wear his or her Shirlee Green Preschool t-shirt for all Shabbat celebrations.**

Family Shabbat Participation: Shabbat celebrations on Fridays at SGP are special. Chaverim families will have an opportunity to schedule a “Special Shabbat” in which the family can participate and take home a prepared Shabbat Basket. At least part of the morning does not look like any other day at preschool. There are songs, special blessings, and we meet together as a preschool community. Preschoolers need time to become familiar with new rituals and celebrations. It takes some time for them to settle into new routines and understand what is expected of them during this special Shabbat experience.

Though we love to have parents join us for Shabbat, we ask you to allow us time for the children to get settled into our Shabbat routine.

TZEDAKAH: literally means righteous giving. It is a custom prior to lighting the candles for Shabbat, to give tzedakah. We have interpreted this as money. For our children to truly understand their role in making the world a better place (Tikkun Olam), we will be asking them to bring a box or can of food to place in the grocery cart on Friday mornings. The food will be donated to The Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry. This is a tangible way for our children to participate in this wonderful act of tzedakah.

JEWISH HOLIDAYS: In preparation for all of the Jewish holidays, we plan special activities which provide experiences for our children to greater understand and enjoy the actual holiday. Our children love to have their parents join in these celebrations, especially Chanukah and Passover. Please mark your calendars now for these special programs.

BIRTHDAYS: We love to celebrate birthdays! Each classroom celebrates in its own fashion. Be sure to notify your child's teacher to make arrangements to join us! We celebrate birthday without food due to consideration of all dietary concerns.

SNACK DAYS: Each child is given their own snack bag. Please place snack inside each morning. Always be considerate and avoid peanut products.

Make Up Days: We consider the calendar in its entirety; Jewish and Federal Holidays. If a child attends PART TIME and their regular scheduled day falls on a Jewish or Federal Holiday, or school sanctioned closing, a make-up day can occur **within 2 weeks** of said closing. We do not make up absences or snow days determined by families. Please schedule make up days with the preschool office.

Preschool Administration

KAREN LUCY

Director EARLY CHILDHOOD ENGAGEMENT

KENDRA BROWN

Administrative Assistant ECE

Preschool Advisory Council Co-Chairs

JEN BARTON & ERIN SELTZER

Temple Administration

JAMES BENNETT, Rabbi

ANDREA GOLDSTEIN, Rabbi

JONAH ZINN, Rabbi

SETH WARNER, Cantor

JEFFREY B. STIFFMAN, Rabbi Emeritus

ROSALIE STEIN, Executive Director

DEBBIE BRAM, Director of Jewish Life and Learning

LIESSA ALPERIN, Director of Religious School

JODI MILLER, Director of Camp Emeth

ROBERT COLTON, Director of Operations

SHIRLEE GREEN PRESCHOOL

At Shaare Emeth

11645 Ladue Road

St. Louis, Missouri 63141

314-569-0048

www.sestl.org