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THE FOUNDATION & THE FUTURE

ישיבת עץ חיים
Eitz Chaim Schools

Parent Handbook
Early Childhood Division

תשע"ז- תשע"ח
2017 – 2018

בס״ד

תשע"ז

July 2017

Dear Parents, עמו"ש

Welcome to the Pre-School!

The intention of our Early Childhood Department is to provide your child with an enriched, stimulating educational environment that will help to prepare your child for great success in their coming years of formal education. We aim to provide your child with a warm and loving environment coupled with an introduction to the processes and disciplines of formal and social education. We will spend much time combining these ideas with a strong foundation for Yiddishkeit, a love for Hashem, and the excitement of doing Mitzvos.

We look forward to an effective relationship between home and school, in order to provide your child with the best possible care. It is with great enthusiasm that together, we will share in the nachas and watch the tremendous growth that will I''yh take place this coming year.

Should there ever be any concerns or information to share that would be helpful and in the best interest of your child, please do not ever hesitate to call.

We anticipate, that through our mutually cooperative efforts, we will have a very rewarding and growth oriented year full of Yiddishe Nachas!

Sincerely,

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FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR N, JK & SK
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2017

FIRST DAY OF PRE-NURSERY
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

Orientation for Pre-Nursery is Tuesday, September 5.
The Pre-Nursery and Nursery afternoon program begins on Thursday, September 7.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the wonderful new families to ours - the Eitz Chaim Family. We are here to help your children experience a love of learning in a warm atmosphere filled with dedicated teachers and role models. Please keep in mind that the doors of communication are always open to you and we encourage you to share your thoughts with us. Communication is one of the most important keys to success in any relationship.

Our Mission

Our efforts are directed towards moulding well rounded personalities fully committed to the תורה way of life. פרשת השבוע and עברית are major parts of the daily learning as are davening and preparation towards ימים טובים. The learning is full of worthy and relevant content to the daily life of a Jewish child as a member of כלל ישראל. The curriculum, immersed in a content of מצוות, מידות and דרך ארץ has meaning for the child as an individual with a unique personality.

Learning in our classrooms occurs and is achieved through "hands-on" experience. Each child is afforded the opportunity to experience the environment, to experiment, to manipulate and to learn through guided play. The methods used to achieve learning as well as the content learned are multi-faceted; language arts, social studies, science, math and music are used. Each activity is planned and presented by the teacher to meet the needs of the child's given stage of development. קריאה is given top priority in our curriculum. In junior kindergarten the children learn letter and sound recognition, and in senior kindergarten they achieve קריאה mastery.

Young children are naturally curious and if we can build upon this curiosity in the early years, then these children will continue to be enthusiastic learners. Our purpose in early childhood education is to turn them on to learning!

SOME HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE INSTRUCTIONS

Please ensure that your child is in good health before starting school. Please make sure that your child comes to school well rested every day.

When to keep your child at home:

1. If there are any symptoms of illness, (i.e. fever, stomach ache, sore throat and nausea) please keep your child at home in order to prevent spreading the illness to others. If your child has experienced fever, please allow for at least a 24-hour recovery time (fever free), before sending him/her back to school.
2. A child who throws up the night before or early in the morning should be kept home. This is in the best interest of the child and the other children as well.
3. Rashes should be investigated by a physician before sending a child to school.
4. Please contact the school immediately if your child contracts any contagious disease. We will notify you of any such illness in your child's class. Some of the illnesses included in this list are *measles, mumps, chicken pox, rubella, fifth disease, coxsackie virus, strep throat and conjunctivitis (pink eye)*. The child must have confirmation from a doctor that he/she is fit to return to school.
5. The Early Childhood department at Eitz Chaim is prohibited from dispensing any medication without the parent's written permission.

When the school will send a child home:

When a child cannot function in school or shows symptoms that may infect other children the parent will be called to take the child home. Please make sure that the information on the Emergency Contact Form is kept updated. It will be the decision of the Director on such occasions as to whether the child should be taken home.

BITING POLICY: For a first time incident, both sets of parents will be informed as soon as possible. Should there be subsequent biting incidents, the parents will be called and the child will be sent home, at the discretion of the Early Childhood director.

Admission

Applications are processed in the order they are received with priority given to younger siblings of Eitz Chaim students.

The makeup of our class lists is determined through careful consideration and is based upon the learning dynamics of a particular class and teacher input.

We require that families and students are שומרי תורה ומצוות and will conduct themselves at all times according to תורה standards. It is expected, as well that families admitted to Eitz Chaim will share the school's hashkafos, values and objectives, and will support and foster these standards in all areas of lifestyle.

As a prerequisite to the Nursery program, all children should be fully toilet trained.

A period of four to six weeks is allowed for a new child to settle into the school routine. Should the director, in consultation with the teacher(s), observe that a child is not adjusting and/or not benefiting from the program, the administration will be consulted. Recommendations will be made to the parents as to how to proceed in the best interest of the child.

PLEASE BE SURE ALL NECESSARY FORMS AND DOCUMENTS ARE SUBMITTED BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

School Hours

SPRING FARM

Pre-Nursery

Monday – Thursday:	9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (extended option till 2:45 p.m.)
Friday:	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Nursery

Monday – Thursday:	9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.
Friday:	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

JK and SK	**Early drop off optional, from 8:00 am Pre-registration required**
Monday – Thursday:	9:00 a.m.-3:45 p.m.
Friday:	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

VIEWMOUNT

Pre-Nursery

Monday – Thursday	9:00 am – 1:00 pm (extended option till 2:45)
Friday	9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Nursery

Monday – Thursday	9:00 am – 2:45 pm
Friday	9:00 am – 1:00 pm

JK and SK	**Early drop off optional, from 8:30 am Pre-registration required**
Monday – Thursday	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Friday	9:00 – 1:00

School begins daily at 9:00 a.m., please be sure to be on time. It is disruptive to the child and the other students in the class when the teacher must tend to a latecomer.

Please do not drop off your pre-school child outside the school building and drive away. It is the responsibility of the adult to bring the child into the care of a staff person. The school cannot be held responsible for children dropped off in the care of other students.

It is important that students be prompt so that their day starts smoothly.

Attendance

Teachers take note of and keep a careful daily record of your child's attendance. Regular attendance facilitates the development of proper classroom attitudes and behaviour and fosters positive relationships with teachers and peers alike. Your child will be missed by all when he/she is absent. If you know that your child will be absent from school, please let us know in advance. Whether it is for a simcha, or G-d forbid, a sad occasion we can respond to your child more effectively if we are aware of the situation.

The safety and security of all our students is our first priority. An "early dismissal" request must be made in writing, by phone or email to the school secretary prior to 2:00 p.m. Please include time and purpose of dismissal.

After 9:05 a.m. every morning, parents have no access to any classrooms.

EITZ CHAIM SCHOOL'S POLICY ON PROTECTION OF ANAPHYLACTIC TALMIDIM

In keeping with legislation in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Eitz Chaim Schools will provide as safe an environment as is possible for its talmidim who are anaphylactic. Anaphylaxis means a severe systemic allergic reaction which can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. The most common allergic substances are peanuts and nut products, but there are many other substances that are potentially dangerous.

Therefore, in order to make Eitz Chaim a safer place, the pending legislation will be fully implemented to the best of our ability. In that vein, Eitz Chaim maintains a strict policy that any product containing any trace of peanut / nuts or nut products, no matter how small, is not allowed on school property at any time. This policy is in effect for any organized use of the school property by any group when school is in session or not in session.

Since the school does not have the resources to monitor or control all foods brought into the buildings, we are dependent on the vigilance and cooperation of the parents to comply with this important guideline. The school and the families of allergic children acknowledge that it is impossible to create an absolutely safe environment for children who have these life-threatening allergies, notwithstanding the school's best efforts. However, we must insist that there be no intentional non compliance with this "peanut/nut sensitivity" rule. Keep in mind: strict compliance with this rule may avert a possible tragic occurrence within the school.

Guidelines:

1. The school will only provide foods that are acknowledged or represented to be peanut/nut free.
2. The school will stress the importance of compliance with this rule and remind parents on a regular basis.
3. The school will provide timely training to teachers and staff on dealing with life-threatening allergies.

Parents of allergic children are required to:

- Provide "Epi-Pens" in case of an emergency **(Note: Twinjects are not permitted)**.
- Sign a waiver on this issue. (see online summer mailing)
- Provide a release allowing staff to administer the medicine or injection when or if needed.
- Provide an "emergency alert form" with a picture to the classroom and to the school office.
- Ensure that the information in the student's file is kept up-to-date with the medication that the pupil is taking.

As an extra precaution, we ask parents to reinforce the policy of not sharing foods on school grounds. In regard to items brought into the school for purposes of sharing (birthday parties, class parties etc.), bakery items must be purchased from a "nut-free" establishment. At present the bakeries are Amazing Donuts, Hermes, Grodzinki's North and South, Isaac's Bakery and Richmond Bakery. In regard to packaged items, these must be totally nut-free. Any child found to be mistakenly breaking this guideline by bringing peanut or nut products to school will have the inappropriate food confiscated and disposed of. Any occurrences of this will result in calls from the Principals to the parents.

Clothing

1. Please label all clothing and outerwear.
2. Your child's clothing should be simple, comfortable and suitable for playing as well as for using paints and other materials used in our preschool. For the safety of your child, please make sure that he/she wears proper shoes (no crocs or flip-flops please).
3. Please send in a complete change of labelled clothing in a Ziploc or a small box. This is to be kept in school and used if needed. For the boys (required for ages 3 and up), be sure to include an extra pair of tzitzis and a yarmulke.

4. Self-reliance in dressing is an important developmental step. Please take this into account when choosing your child's clothing and outerwear. Zippers, buttons and snaps that a child can easily manipulate encourages independence and self-esteem.

5. Please dress your child with outdoor clothing appropriate to the weather so that they can fully participate in all facets of our program.

6. Diaper changing (Pre-Nursery only). Please send in a container of wipes, and a package of diapers for your child. We will do our best to assist you in toilet training your child when you are ready. Please make sure to let us know what is most comfortable for your child so that we can best help him/her.

Birthdays

Birthday parties have spiralled into a sizable expenditure of money and energy. We suggest that your child's birthday be celebrated in class. Your child's teacher will make this a special time with a story, song or a game. You are welcome to supply a special treat from a kosher, nut-free bakery for the children to enjoy. All dairy ingredients need to be חלב ישראל. Please do not send party favours or goody bags to be distributed in class.

Families have the option to present a book, a game or a CD to the class in honour of the birthday.

When making home birthday parties, please be sensitive and adhere to the חינוך and spirit of the Eitz Chaim hashkafa.

Lunch

Please send a nutritious lunch with your child Monday thru Thursday. The school will provide a morning and an afternoon snack daily for JK and SK children only, which may include crackers, pretzels, rice cakes as well as fresh fruit or a vegetable and water. Please try to limit sending in "junk food" treats in your child's lunch. Please be sure to label all lunch boxes and drink containers.

Parent Involvement

At Eitz Chaim we believe that the essential, close relationship between home and school is achieved through ongoing communication.

1. Please notify us should there be any unusual circumstances or occurrences in the home which would affect your child.

2. Curriculum Night: Early in the school year a curriculum evening is held. Parents have the opportunity to visit the classes and learn about the curriculum. Through pictures or videos, the teachers outline their goals and objectives for the coming year. This evening is not designed to discuss your child's progress.

3. Newsletters: Parents receive newsletters and Parsha sheets every Friday along with your child's work. Our aim is to keep parents informed of events, topics and activities covered in class. Please invest the time to share the contents with your child.

4. Parent Volunteers: Our Eitz Chaim parents have a vast talent set. When asked, please do not hesitate to become involved in your child's learning experiences.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Individual conferences are held in November to discuss the child's progress. Report cards are issued in January and June to all grades. If for any reason you wish to speak with your child's teacher at any time, please leave a message with the office and the teacher will return your call as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can send an email to your child's teacher to arrange a time to speak.

During the second term, there is a second parent/teacher conference for those students whose progress needs attention as per the school's expectation in at least one academic area or for a behavioural reason. Additionally, a second conference may be requested either by the school or the parents to discuss any matters. Parents will be able to sign up for both sets of conferences electronically. Specific instructions will be sent to all parents.

Parent Dress Code

Upon entering the school grounds on any occasion, all parents of Eitz Chaim students are required to respect the environment of the school and dress in accordance with halachic standards.

For men – a hat or yarmulke and appropriate dress must be worn

For women – skirts should cover the knees, sleeves should cover the elbows and necklines should be covered to the collar bone.

We thank you for your respect and cooperation in this sensitive matter. It is only with the collective efforts of both home and school that we can have a positive effect on our talmidim and talmidos.

Eitz Chaim Internet/Media Policy (An Updated Policy, Please Review Carefully)

1. Use of the internet by Eitz Chaim families:

Parents are required to protect their children from the dangers of the internet by placing an appropriate filter such as K9 Web Protection on all computers that children are able to access or commit to not allowing their children access to the internet without effective adult supervision. As well, some Wi-Fi capable devices are capable of accessing the internet from neighboring unblocked signals, Parents should familiarize themselves with the security settings of these devices.

2. Current Policy on TV, Movies and Videos

Eitz Chaim has long been opposed to the viewing of TV, movies and videos. Almost any such viewing today can expose our children's neshamos to the decadence of much of modern society that is prevalent today. It can definitely undermine the standards of tznius, kedushah, morals and ethics that our Moros try to instill in their students and which should be the standards of our homes. It is unconscionable that parents allow their children to watch programs that directly or indirectly, open or subtly, destroy any sensitivity to the above standards.

3. Eitz Chaim: A Media-Free Zone

Eitz Chaim's position is that most of what appears on TV has no place in a Jewish home, and therefore children should be reminded not to discuss, in school, anything they might have watched. Likewise, your child's clothing should reflect the Eitz Chaim haskafa of a media-free culture.

Eitz Chaim appreciates the partnership between the school and the home to help create a Torah infused environment where all children can grow physically and spiritually.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The following are vital rules for drivers at both campuses. Please observe them meticulously.

1. **PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY**
2. Please avoid excessive idling, especially in the presence of children.

SPRING FARM CAMPUS

Morning Arrival

All preschool children should enter through the main doors of the building only.

Two teachers will be on duty supervising in the JK/SK hallway for any parents who need to drop off their children between **8:30 a.m.** and 9:00 a.m. **The early drop off is for JK/SK children only.** For those parents who wish to accompany their children to their classrooms, please park in the BAYT parking lot and remain in the lobby until the bell rings. No children are allowed in the building before 8:30 a.m.

Afternoon Dismissal

Carpool Procedures

1. Cars enter single file through the SOUTH gate with the carpool number visible in the front right windshield.
2. The children, grouped according to carpool numbers in the school lobby, will be brought outside to their waiting carpool.
3. It is the carpool parent's responsibility to load and bucked the children into the car.
4. Cars exit through the NORTH gate.
5. Parents that opt out of carpool should park in the BAYT parking lot and enter the school through the north side doors of the building.

Please be aware that parking in the fire route along the front curb of the school building is a hazard to our children and prohibited by law. You must park in a designated parking spot, either in the school parking lot or in the adjacent BAYT parking lot, even if entering the building for only a few minutes.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

VIEWMOUNT CAMPUS (from 8:35 to 9:05 a.m.)

VIEWMOUNT DRIVEWAY IS ONE-WAY ONLY

Drop Off

1. When dropping off preschool children only, cars should enter the parking lot on Prue Avenue via the East driveway.
2. The courtyard gate will be open after 8:35 so that parents can drive in, park their car, and walk their child/carpool into the Pre-School building.
3. For early drop-off (JK and SK only), please be sure that your child does not enter the building alone.
4. Parents are asked to walk with children behind the concrete parking curbs.

Pick Up (See separate carpool attachment)

1. Cars should enter the parking lot on Prue Avenue via the **East driveway only**.
2. Cars will be directed by a staff member on duty to enter the courtyard.
3. Staff will bring carpool children to the appropriate cars; parents are requested to ensure children are safely strapped in to a proper car seat. If you are bringing additional children home for a play date, and you don't have a car seat – PLEASE ask to borrow a booster seat from the office. Our goal is to ensure the safety of all the children.
4. Parents should only exit via the west gate, turning right to exit onto Viewmount Avenue.
5. Allow the arm to lower after the car in front of you has exited, before approaching the arm.
6. At no time should your car be left running unattended with children inside.

Please feel free to call ANYTIME.

No question is insignificant if it involves your child.