



2017-2018 PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

5778-5779



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EsformesHebrewAcademy.org

Executive Director ~ Rabbi Pinchas Ezagui

Director ~ Chani Ezagui

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School Philosophy

The Esformes Hebrew Academy Preschool exists to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate environment for Preschool age children. Our focus is to provide a stimulating early care and education experience fostering Jewish values, a love of learning which promotes each child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday through Thursday
8:15am – 4:00pm

Friday
8:15am – 2:00pm*

Half-Day Option for Preschool
8:15am – 11:30am Monday through Friday

****Please note that Friday dismissal will be at 2:00pm for the entire year, unless otherwise indicated.***



SCHOLARSHIP

Please contact the office for more information.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at school is important to a child's achievement and success in school. When your child is absent from school, please call the school at 672-9300 by **8:00am**.

TARDINESS

Help your child learn consideration for others by bringing him/her to school on time. When a child enters a classroom late, it is disruptive to the teacher and other children. It is also difficult for the child who is late. In addition to missing an unhurried greeting from the teacher, the child may miss the formation of peer playgroups/circle time and valuable information that may impact on the day's activities.

Arriving on time is an essential skill that must be learned at an early age. It shows respect for others and conveys the importance of the destination, whether it is the arrival to school or an appointment.

Class begins at 8:15am. It is recommended that students be in their classrooms before class starts.

BEFORE SCHOOL PROCEDURE

1. Please park in a designated parking spot. Parking in the Drop-Off/Pick-Up Zone is prohibited.
2. Please follow the directional arrows when pulling into the parking lot and Drop-Off/Pick-Up Zone.
3. The doors to the preschool are unlocked from 7:55am to 8:10am. Please walk your child into class to **sign him/her in on the sign-in sheet**. After 8:10am, please come to the office for admittance to the preschool.
4. As soon as school begins at 8:15am our teachers must be completely involved with supervising your children without any distraction. All conversations with teachers must be reserved for after-school hours, except in the case of an emergency.

UNINTERRUPTED LESSON TIME

To allow the teaching staff to engage and focus on the students during circle time, late students will not enter into the room during this time. Parents must remain with their children in the lobby until circle time is over and then sign them into class. Circle time is from 8:45am – 9:15am.



DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Children will only be released to their parents or someone previously designated by the parents with authority for pick-up. If someone other than the parents is picking up and is not on the designated list, please let us know by leaving a message on our dismissal line, extension 316. If this is a permanent change, please email dismissalchanges@esformeshebrewacademy.org. **Parents are expected to be in the carpool line by 4:00pm Monday-Thursday and 2:00pm on Friday. All dismissal changes must be placed on the Dismissal Change voicemail system for EHA by 3:20pm Monday-Thursday and 1:20pm on Friday. (Follow instructions on automated message)**

Children who leave at 11:30 will be dismissed from the back gate at the playground. Parents should park in the back and pick up children from their teachers in this area.

See General Information

- Follow main traffic circle to Drop-Off and Pick-Up Zone, yellow curb
- Pull up as far as possible.
- Remain in car. Your child(ren) will be brought to you.
- *Parents are to physically come into the Preschool to pick up their two-year old students for dismissal at 11:30am.

Please refrain from exiting your car to speak to teachers or other parents. The flow of traffic depends on you!

PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

Florida Statutes require **all** preschool students, to be signed in by a parent or designee. Pre-K4 children must also be signed out by a parent or designee.

EARLY PICK UP/DISMISSAL CHANGES - before 3:30pm

If your child must leave before afternoon dismissal at 4:00pm, we ask that you please pick your child up by 3:30pm. *Parents are expected to be in the carpool line by **4:00pm**. Due to the high volume calls at this time, dismissal changes for that day must be placed on the dismissal change voicemail system, extension 316, by 3:20pm. (Follow instructions on automated message). If you have a dismissal change one or more days in advance, please email dismissalchanges@esformeshebrewacademy.org. We would also encourage you to make your children's appointments either before 3:30pm or after 4 pm.

LATE PICK UP - after 4:10pm

We understand emergencies can happen, and we do our best to deal with exceptions when necessary. We ask you to keep in mind that our staff needs to be elsewhere when sessions finish, and that we are not able to properly accommodate children after their scheduled pick-up time. It is clear that this situation is upsetting to children and can ruin a perfectly fine day! Please be sure to be prompt. *You must come inside to pick up your child/children, please park your car in a designated parking spot.*

*Park in a **designated parking spot**. Parking in Drop-Off/Pick-Up Zone, yellow curb, is prohibited.

*Come inside and pick up your child.

*Each minute you are late will be documented. Chronically tardy parents **will be charged \$10.00 for the first five (5) minutes and then \$2.00 for each consecutive minute.**

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VISITING PROCEDURE

ALL visitors, including parents, must:

- *Park in a **designated parking spot**. Parking in Drop-Off and Pick-Up Zone, yellow curb, is prohibited.
- *Ring doorbell to the left of the front door
- *Come directly to the office to sign-in and obtain a visitor/volunteer pass.
- *After reporting to the office and receiving a pass, parents or visitors will be directed to their conference room or classroom.

Parents are encouraged to visit and confer with the teachers or administrators, however, parents must make an appointment in advance. Teachers cannot be interrupted for conferences during instructional time, or during times when they are supervising children.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

At EHA coded drills are completed on a monthly basis. In the event of an actual emergency evacuation, parents will be called with pick up location and time.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Esformes Hebrew Academy follows the Volusia County school system in the event of emergency closings.

HEALTH POLICY

The health of our pre-school students is important to their parents and is also a concern for our faculty. If your children are not feeling well, please keep them home. This will protect their health, as well as the health of the other children in the class.

Please inform the school in the event of communicable disease (i.e., chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), measles).

If the staff considers a child too sick to be exposed to the other children or too sick to participate in the day's activities, parents will be called and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. The staff will use their own discretion concerning the seriousness of a cold and take the student's temperature. **If the child has a fever of a 100° or higher, the parent will be called and the child MUST be picked up.**

Vomiting/diarrhea will require no admittance until a 24 hour period has passed. If your child vomits at home or school, he or she cannot return for 24 hours and must be symptom-free without medication

Students with a rash will be sent to the office for observation.

Rash (all ages)

Any child with an undiagnosed rash will be sent home with any of the following symptoms:

- ✓ rash is spreading over a period of time
- ✓ rash is widespread
- ✓ rash appears to cause discomfort and/or is accompanied by fever
- ✓ rash persists for more than two days
- ✓ rash contains or consists of blisters or rash looks like bleeding under the skin



Child will be excused from school until a note is provided by the child's physician stating the diagnosis and that the child is not contagious.

Medical Forms: State regulations mandate that all children have an updated medical form showing that they are up-to-date on their physicals and all vaccinations. Failure to provide an updated medical form WILL prevent your child from attending school. All students MUST have an admittance pass to be admitted to school on the first day. (Please see list of all forms to be turned in below.)

Head Lice: All children will have their hair checked for lice or nits periodically. Any child that is found with lice or nits in his or her hair will not be permitted to attend school until they are lice/nit-free.

Minor Injury: If you child receives a minor injury or bruise at school, appropriate first aid will be administered. You will receive a Boo-Boo Report, completed by the teacher indicating details about the injury. Parents will sign the report as well.

Emergency Numbers: Parents must keep the school updated with any changes to phone numbers, emergency contacts and other pertinent information.

STUDENT FORMS

The following forms are included in your child's back to school packet. All forms must be turned in before school begins. These forms can be found on the website at www.EsformesHebrewAcademy.org.

- _____ **Online Registration Completed** (Medical Information, Emergency Contact and Transportation, Tuition Agreement, Field Trip Permission, Late Fees and Admittance Pass Procedures)
- _____ **Additional Forms Printed, Signed and Returned**
 - _____ **Arrival & Dismissal (Parent Release Form)**
 - _____ **Late Pick-up Fee**
 - _____ **Photo Release**
 - _____ **Communication Preference Form**
- _____ **Child's Health Forms** (Immunization and Physical)
- _____ **Building Fund**
- _____ **Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

ADDITIONAL FORMS FOR NEW STUDENTS

- _____ **Preschool Teacher-Student Evaluation Form**
- _____ **Relocation/Principal Form (to be sent by Front Office directly to school)**
- _____ **Behavior Observation Form**
- _____ **Initial Visit Form**



DRESS CODE

1. Please send two complete labeled changes of clothing (i.e. socks, underwear, shirt, pants) in a plastic bag (with the child's name written on the outside of the bag). These changes of clothing will remain at school.
2. Please keep in mind, your child will be engaged in messy crafts/floor activities/water play. In spite of wearing protective smocks, they sometimes get paint or other media on their clothing, so please dress your child accordingly.
3. All children must wear closed shoes. No flip-flops.

SCHOOL T-SHIRTS

Esformes Hebrew Academy T-shirts must be worn on all school outings. They are available for a fee of \$10.00.

YARMULKES/KIPPOT

The **Esformes Hebrew Academy** Kippa can be purchased for \$10.00

PLEASE KEEP THESE ITEMS AT HOME:

- Baby Bottles
- Candy
- Gum

SNACKS-CHOKING HAZARDS

To make your mornings simpler and to keep consistency for our preschoolers, we provide a wholesome snack daily.

To Be Included:

Fruit, Crackers, Veggi-Straws, Granola Bars, Rice Cakes, etc.

Because we are so concerned for the safety of your children, we follow the Department of Children and Families guidelines at snack time.

Following is a list of foods that are choking hazards and **must not be sent to the preschool**:

- Nuts of any kind
- Raisin/Craisins
- Popcorn
- Hard Candy
- Raw carrots
- Grapes (can be sent in if they are cut into quarters – four pieces)

NON-DAIRY SCHOOL ZONE

Please note that on Wednesdays, the EHA Café will serve pizza. However, students are not allowed to bring **ANY** dairy items at **ANY** time. If there is something on the menu your child can not eat, you may send in a **non-dairy** lunch as an alternative.

Please do not bring any food items with this symbol.





For Shabbos Parties: On your child's rotation, parents provide a fruit and pay \$5.00 for the purchasing of other snack items. Money to be given to the bookkeeper.

SCHOOL PARTIES & BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are encouraged to be celebrated at school on the Hebrew birth date. Children love to celebrate their birthdays at school and we recommend you have a party for the class. You may bring a special snack for the occasion: cake, cupcakes. Food brought into the school must be certified kosher. Please check with the school's director before purchasing any cakes. Loot bags and party favors are unacceptable. Please leave ALL candy at home. You may ask the teacher for the class wish list if wanting to purchase a gift for the children. Your child's teacher will add stories, songs and games to make this a special day for your child. **Please contact your child's teacher at least one week in advance so that a mutually convenient time and date can be arranged.**

Please refer to the Preschool Birthday Party Information Guide to plan your child's birthday party.

Private Birthday Parties: If you plan on having a private birthday celebration for your child outside of school, please be sensitive to your child's classmates. We recommend you invite all your child's classmates.

Purim Baskets: EHA has firm policies regarding student sharing of foods as well as nutritional guidelines. As we approach Purim, a well-known holiday for sharing sweet foods, please check to see if your child might have received gifts from a classmate that the school is not aware. Make sure to talk to your child about your family's individual dietary guidelines.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Open communication between the school's director, principal, teachers and parents is an integral component of **Esformes Hebrew Academy**. A weekly newsletter will be sent home with updates and information regarding the preschool program. PLEASE be sure to check the PTO Facebook, e-mail and student bags for any necessary information.

Change of Environment

We need to know of any changes taking place in your child's environment. The birth of a baby, change of babysitter or family crisis can affect your child's behavior in school. The more informed we are, the more we can do to offer extra support and understanding to your child during unusually stressful times.

Change of Contact Information

Please notify the office of any mailing address, home or cell phone number, and/or email address changes.

Daily Notes

*Look in your child's bag

*Your child napped/didn't nap

*Your child ate/didn't eat

Note: Each child will be provided with a Parent/Teacher Communicator Folder. Information to be included is daily work and projects, important information for parents and students, and on occasion, forms that may need to be signed by a parent and returned to the school. Two and Three Year Old children's class will also be sent home with a daily information sheet. The fee to replace the Parent/Teacher Communicator Folder is \$3.00 and can be purchased from the bookkeeper.



School Events

Parent attendance at school events is essential to children's school success. Event notices will be sent home throughout the year via your child and emailed to the address on file. **Please take a moment each day to check your child's belongings for school notices since many of the notices may be time sensitive.**

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is a formal organization composed of parents, teachers, and staff members intended to facilitate parental participation in our school. The goal of the PTO is to support our school, encourage parent involvement, support teachers, and organize fundraising and family events.

CURRICULUM

Our school provides a curriculum that incorporates all areas of a child's development; physical, emotional, social, and cognitive, through an integrated approach.

The curriculum emphasizes learning as an interactive process. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration. Opportunities are provided for children to choose from a variety of interest areas, with time to explore through discovery and involvement. Adults facilitate children's engagement with materials and activities and extend the children's learning by asking open ended questions or making suggestions that stimulate children's thinking.

Educational documentation of your child's learning will be presented in the form of a Portfolio. The Portfolio will capture the five domains of your child's learning: Approaches to Learning, Social Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Cognition and General Knowledge, and Physical Development. Each child in our program has a portfolio that follows their development. These documentations come in the form of a developmental checklist, stories, photographs, conversations and artwork, much like a personal journal or diary. The Portfolios show off the child's strengths, their relationships with others and their growth over the course of the school year. Parents are welcome to view their child's portfolio throughout the year.

Learning Centers

To promote the child's total development, the following **learning centers** will be included in his/her pre-school experience:

***Dramatic Play *Construction Center (Blocks) *Art Center
*Writing Center *Computer/Listening *Library *Math Manipulatives
*Science *Language/Literacy (ABC's)**

Once entering the classroom and being greeted by the teacher, the students are given the freedom to explore the various learning activities and interest centers that have been prepared before their arrival. These centers are changed from week to week, day to day, and sometimes from hour to hour. Keeping the centers new keeps the children interested. However, enough things remain the same to provide the security and comfort of familiarity. Every Friday, the children will celebrate Shabbat by baking Challah and participating in a model Shabbat dinner.

POTTY TRAINING

Teachers will assist with potty training if the child is ready. This is a parent and teacher effort and is up to the discretion of the Director and teacher if the child is ready or not.



SHOW AND SHARE

Friday will be Show and Share Day for all preschool classes, Pre-K 2, Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4. The children can bring in any item related to the designated theme they choose from home, of course, with the approval of Mom first! They will have the opportunity to talk about it to their classmates during circle time and share it with their friends during free play. This gives the children an opportunity to share their belongings with their friends while boosting their confidence. Toys should **ONLY** be brought in for Show and Share Day. Teachers cannot be responsible for toys brought in any other day.

SHABBOS PARTY

Every Friday each preschool class will hold a Shabbos Party and two children will be picked to be the Shabbos Imma and Abba. Parents will be provided with a list of the date your child is selected to be Imma/Abba**. Upon the child's chosen date, he/she can come to school dressed like he/she is going to Shul. We ask the Imma and Abba to "host" the party by providing fruit and paying \$5.00 for other special snacks provided by the teacher

***If for any reason your child is unable to attend the Shabbos party during the assigned week, please let your child's teacher know. You may choose to switch the date and make arrangements with another parent in the class. It will be the parents' responsibility to make the arrangements and to notify the teacher of any such changes.*

ATTACHMENT TOYS

Please keep items, such as: blankets, baby dolls, teddy bears, and pacifiers to be kept at home. However, if your child **MUST** have them for attachment reasons, we will allow, however, encourage the weaning process.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is implemented in the weekly curriculum. Coach Barb, our P.E. teacher, is dedicated to assisting the children with strengthening balance and coordination; developing throwing and catching skills, social participation, teamwork and motor coordination while having fun too.

OUTDOOR PLAY GUIDELINES

The preschool students will be going outside daily. Large motor development is essential, as well as fresh air, vigorous activity and the freedom of the playground is important. Moderate cold or rainy weather will not keep us inside, but teachers will listen to the children and adjust the outdoor schedule based on their comfort. All children must have the appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. If the weather is threatening thunder & lightning or there is a tornado warning we will stay inside.

PRESCHOOL NAPTIME

For those children who do not fall asleep; children must lie down quietly for 30 minutes. They will then be given a quiet activity.

COMMUNITY VISITORS

The staff welcomes interesting visitors (i.e., doctors, musicians, artists) to the program, who will talk with the pre-school children about their professions, interest, or hobbies. Please inform the staff if you know of such a person, since the children will enjoy their participation in the program.

TZEDAKAH

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



MITZVAH NOTE

A Mitzvah note will be sent home each week. The theme-related note will be on colored construction paper. *Themes examples: apple shaped for Rosh Hashanah and leaves for Tu B'Shevat.* Parents are encouraged to send a note in periodically with a written mitzvah your child has done at home. Every morning the Hebrew teacher will read the notes after davening. Children really look forward to hearing what their parents have to say.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The goal of classroom management is to help the child become self-disciplined. This is viewed as an integral part of educating the child. Discipline at **Esformes Hebrew Academy** will take the form of positive classroom management. The school recognizes children are unique individuals who behave and learn in different ways. The school strives to help the child become self-controlled, that is, to help him/her to experience the intrinsic pleasure in appropriate behavior as opposed to “behaving” just to please adults. The school encourages children to be independent and to solve their own problems. The teacher will lead the child to this point gradually, offering assistance and modeling along the way.

*Expectations are stated in the positive form, such as “Please walk,” versus “Don’t run”.

*Teaching staff uses meaningful and descriptive praise.

*Teaching staff respects the child.

*Teaching staff does nothing to humiliate or shame the child.

The school takes into consideration behavior that is developmentally appropriate, and provides age appropriate equipment, materials, and activities.

Teaching staff speaks to the behavior, not the child, e.g., “Hitting hurts. Let’s find another way to solve this problem” instead of, “You are a bad child for hitting”.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our policies prohibit children from being subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited by all child care personnel.

The policy of the **Esformes Hebrew Academy** is to provide a safe and educational environment to all the children in attendance. Naturally, altercations between children do occur and some children may not adjust as quickly as others to a school environment. Our staff will model positive behavior and provide exciting activities to allow each child to learn and grow at their own pace and intervene as necessary when altercations occur. Our discipline policy includes the following steps:

1. **Redirection** – if altercations between children occur or a child is unable to interact positively with other children, the children or child is redirected to different activities.
2. **Reinforcement** – positive behavior is reinforced to children by simple and non-accusatory language and modeling by the teacher
3. **Intervention** – a preventative plan is formulated by the child’s teacher to include more one-on-one time during school hours with activities the child enjoys
4. **Collaboration** – an intervention plan is discussed between teacher and parents which will be used both in the classroom and at home



5. **Assessment** – with the parent’s approval, the child may need to be assessed by a qualified specialist
6. **Intercession Plan** – with the aid from the assessment results and the specialist, an intercession plan will be initiated in the classroom and at home
7. **Withdrawal** – if the child still exhibits aggressive or disruptive behavior after all the above steps have been utilized, the **Esformes Hebrew Academy** reserves the right to withdraw the child from the program; however, all efforts will be made to assist the parent in finding another program the child can enroll into which may be more conducive to his/her needs.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

If in the opinion of the Principal/Director, a child demonstrates repeated behavior which is harmful to others or him/herself, the child will be asked that the child not be brought to school until a discussion and plan is in place.

TORAH TOTS PROGRAM FOR AGES 18 – 24 MONTHS

The Esformes Hebrew Academy Preschool is open to preschool children 18-24 months of age on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8:00am – 11:30am. The child must have turned 18 months of age as of August 31st to be considered for admittance into the program. Class size and age of children already enrolled in the program will determine availability.

RILYA WILSON ACT

EHA is committed to comply with the Rilya Wilson Act requirements as stated in the 2014 Florida Statues 39.604 Rilya Wilson Act. Children who are subject to this law cannot be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of community based lead agency’s case management organization (CPC). EHA will notify the case worker using the Report of Absences for At-Risk Children Form when a child under the protection the Rilya Wilson Act has an unexcused absence of seven consecutive of excused absences.

EHA has an open door policy for all students with the following procedure:

- *Visiting Procedure
- *All visitors including parents must:
- *Park in designated parking spot
- *Ring the doorbell to the left of the front door
- *Come directly to the office to sign-in and obtain a visitor/volunteer pass
- *After receiving a pass and reporting to the office, parents or visitors will be directed to their conference or classrooms.

Parents are encouraged to visit and confer with the teachers or administrators, however, parents must make an appointment in advance. Teachers cannot be interrupted for conferences during instructional time, or during times when they are supervising children.



ENCOURAGING WORDS

Once a man was walking along a beach; the sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. Off in the distance he could see a person going back and forth between the surf's edge and the beach. Back and forth this person went. As the man approached, he could see that there were hundreds of starfish stranded on the sand as the result of the natural action of the tide.

The man was stuck by the apparent futility of the task. There were far too many starfish. Many of them were sure to perish. As he approached, the person continued the task of picking up starfish one by one and throwing them into the surf.

As he came up to the person, he said: "You must be crazy. There are thousands of miles of beach covered with starfish. You can't possibly make a difference." The person looked at the man. He then stooped down and picked up one more starfish and threw it back into the ocean. He turned back to the man and said: "It sure made a difference to that one!"

EHA....MOVING FROM GOOD TO GREAT!



CHARACTERISTICS OF A THRIVING PRESCHOOLER*

Confidence
Curiosity
Intentionality
Self-control
Relatedness
Capacity to communicate
Cooperativeness

*National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000



HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the **Esformes Hebrew Academy** Preschool Handbook.

I understand that this handbook contains information regarding the academy's rules and regulation which affect me, as a parent and my child(ren).

I acknowledge that I have read and understood **Esformes Hebrew Academy's** policies.

I also understand that the academy may revise, supplement or rescind policies and procedures described in the handbook with, or without, notice.

Print Name

Date

Parent Signature