



Hillel Academy of Pittsburgh Early Childhood Handbook

Mission Statement

The Hillel Academy Preschool seeks to create an environment where each child can grow and develop emotionally, socially, cognitively, as well as physically. Our aim is for each child to reach his or her fullest potential through developmentally appropriate activities using creativity, imagination, experimentation and problem solving.

The Hillel Academy Preschool adds a religious and Judaic cultural dimension which seeks to develop faith in Hashem (G-d), a love for things Jewish and an involvement in the Mitzvot (precepts) of the Torah.

All of our classes provide each child with a host of both independent and group oriented activities in a wholesome and warm environment. Our goal is for each child to feel good about him or herself and that he or she views himself or herself as a competent, capable person.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

During the opening sessions of the first two days of school (as described in our previous letter to you), it is important that parents accompany his/her child(ren) to the classroom.

PreNursery	8:10 to 11:50
Nursery	8:10 AM to 12:00 Noon or 2:00 PM (3 day/week or 5 day/week program)
PreKindergarten (PreK)	8:10 AM to 2:15 PM
Kindergarten	8:10 AM to 2:15 PM
Extended Day Program	2:15 PM to 5:00 PM; Monday – Thursday

Permission from administration is necessary before changing any of your child's assigned days of attendance in Nursery.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Arrival: Preschool classes begin at 8:10 AM. Those who come earlier (bussed in) should stay in the lunchroom until 8:10 AM

Dismissal: At 2:00 PM, the playground will be open as a drive-through. Please do not leave your car. Please observe the "No Parking" signs at the entrance to the playground. Preschool dismissal will take place from the lunchroom. If your child will be going to someone else's house or if you are changing your child's carpool arrangements, please send a written note to the school with the date on top. All drivers involved in the carpool must be informed of the change in arrangements by the **parent**. The school cannot be responsible for last minute changes in carpool arrangements. The unexpected is often distressing to a child and creates a lot of unnecessary confusion at dismissal time.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH HINTS

1. All immunization forms must be completed before the first day of school. State law requires that no student may enter class if the immunization forms are not on file in the school building.
2. If your child is ill during the night or has a poor night's sleep, please keep your child at home. This may be the first sign of an impending illness.
3. **A child with a fever must be kept at home.** A child should not return to school until s/he has been fever-free for 24 hours.
4. In case of a contagious disease, please notify the school at once. All parents will be notified by the school when a child in the group has a contagious disease so you may check with your physician concerning your own child. If your child should catch a contagious disease, we must have a note from his/her doctor stating that the child is in good health before being readmitted.
5. **Inform the school immediately if your child has lice.** This enables us to quickly do a head check of other students and to avoid the spread of lice. Your child will not be readmitted to school until his/her head has been checked by an authorized Hillel staff member to deem the child is nit free. Please call the office to set up an appointment for a head check.

MEDICATION

If your child receives medication during the school day:

1. Complete an *Authorization for Medication to be Taken during School* form in accordance with the Medication Policy.
2. Regulations require all prescription drugs to be labeled with name and number of pharmacy, name of prescribing physician, prescription number and drug name. All medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be labeled with the child's name and specific directions.
3. Medications must be sent in the original container.
4. **Never** send medication with your child.
5. **Child should be on medication 24 hours before returning to school.**

EMERGENCY HOME CONTACT CARD

Please fill out the emergency home contact card. Please also complete the Early Childhood emergency information sheet and the intake form.

TZEDAKA

Encourage your child to bring Tzedaka money to the school each day.

DRESS CODE

Children should wear comfortable clothes that they can manage and not worry about keeping spotless. Zippers that work and hats that fasten will be helpful to the child and teacher. All boys wear tzitzit (only if toilet trained) and a kippah. Tennis shoes or other sturdy shoes are best for active play. Please remove drawstrings from jacket and sweatshirt hoods as they can be hazardous.

LUNCH

1. Children should bring a dairy or pareve lunch to school everyday. Be sure to put your child's name on the lunch bag/box.
2. All laws of Kashruth must be carefully observed in accordance with the Kashruth rules of Hillel Academy. All food must have an acceptable Kashruth symbol; (e.g., OU, OK, Chaf-K, Star-K).
A list of Kashruth rules is attached. If you have any questions, please call the school office.
3. Please pay special attention to any specific food restrictions for each individual classroom. Questions regarding restrictions can be addressed to the classroom teachers.

SNACKS

A snack will be served in the morning to all pre-school children. Parents are asked to send in snacks for the entire class several times during the year.

FIELD TRIPS

Our children go on many outings during the school year, including walks through the neighborhood, trips to the library or farms or other appropriate local places. Please be sure to sign the **Universal Trip Permission Slip**. Some trips will require transportation—either via school bus or parent drivers. Parents will be informed of details prior to each trip involving transportation. All children must be in car or booster seats.

BIRTHDAYS

1. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday in school, please notify the teacher a few days in advance.
2. It is very nice to donate a book, toy or game to the class in honor of your child's birthday. Contact the teacher for a list of suggestions of items needed for the class.
3. Invitations to birthday parties to be held outside of school may be distributed **only if all children in the class are invited and the party will follow the school's standards of Kashruth and Sabbath observance.**

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have any change in address, phone number, job or home situation, please notify us immediately. The school phone number is 412-521-8131. Teachers cannot be called to the office to answer phone calls during school hours. Messages may be left for teachers and teachers will return parents' phone calls as soon as possible. A school-wide newsletter, the *Hillel Academy Happenings*, is distributed every Friday. In addition, each class in the Early Childhood Department sends home a regular newsletter.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Hillel Academy is responsive to the needs and concerns of parents and children. To insure the greatest efficiency in responding to and working through important issues, it is necessary to follow the appropriate grievance procedure. The first step is to contract your child's teacher. If there is lack of satisfaction at this point, parents should continue moving up the grievance ladder step by step until there is a resolution of the issue. The steps are as follows:

1. Child's teacher
2. Immediate supervisor of the teacher
3. Rabbi Isaacs
4. Hillel Academy President of the Board

If your grievance concerns a school policy contact the school administrator directly involved in the policy first, and afterwards continue up the ladder if necessary. All parent calls will be returned within 48 hours.

THINGS TO BRING -- PreNursery

1. A complete change of clothes in a labeled shoebox. This should include a shirt, long pants or skirt, underwear and socks. **Please label the clothes with your child's full name.**
2. Please label all sweaters, sweatshirts, raincoats, jackets, mittens and boots with your child's full name.
3. 1 package of diapers
4. 1 package of wipes
5. 1 box of tissues
6. A family photograph
7. Comfort objects, such as bottles, pacifiers, special blankets, etc. are acceptable
8. Do **NOT** bring toys, candy, or money (except for Tzedaka). Latex balloons are considered dangerous. Please do not send them to school.

LUNCH AND FOOD SPECIAL NOTE

Please do not send the following items in your child's lunch. Although your child may handle these foods well at home, they are considered a choking hazard in the preschool setting.

Grapes

Raisins

Popcorn

Hard candy

Laffy Taffy

Lollipops

Raw carrots

Gum

Caramels

Gushers

Fruit roll ups

Nuts or seeds

Squeeze bottle drinks

Olives

THINGS TO BRING -- Nursery

1. A complete change of clothes in a labeled shoebox. This should include a shirt, long pants or skirt, underwear and socks. **Please label the clothes with your child's full name.**
2. Please label all sweaters, sweatshirts, raincoats, jackets, mittens and boots with your child's full name.
3. 1 package of diapers (if your child is in diapers)
4. 1 package of wipes (for everyone-they have many uses)
5. 1 box of tissues
6. 2 rolls of paper towels
7. Crib sheet and small child sized blanket for naptime if your child stays until 2:15
8. Current picture of your child
9. Picture of your child and his/her family
10. Bottle of glue (8 oz. size)
11. Washable Crayola markers AND highlighter markers
12. Blank cassette tape
13. Do **NOT** bring toys, candy, or money (except for Tzedaka which should be placed in lunchbox. Latex balloons are considered dangerous. Please do not send them to school.

LUNCHTIME SPECIAL NOTE

Nursery prefers the "old-fashioned" soft or hard lunchbox style since it is used each day as their lunch mat. Please do not send food in your child's lunch which will need to be microwaved or have boiling water added. If your child needs fruit cut up, please help us by doing it at home. Thank you!

Please do not send the following items in your child's lunch. Although your child may handle these foods well at home, they are considered a choking hazard in the preschool setting.

Grapes
Caramels
Raisins
Popcorn

Laffy Taffy
Lollipops
Raw carrots
Hard candy

Gum
Nuts or seeds
Olives

THINGS TO BRING – PreKindergarten (PreK)

1. A complete change of clothes in a Ziploc bag. This should include a shirt, long pants or skirt, underwear and socks. **Please label the clothes with your child's full name.**
2. Extra kippah for boys
3. Please label all sweaters, sweatshirts, raincoats, jackets, mittens and boots with your child's full name.
4. 1 box of tissues
5. 1 roll of paper towels
6. Hand towel for naptime
7. Crayola brand colored pencils (12 count)
8. Crayola washable markers (fat, classic colors)
9. Crayola washable markers (thin, any colors)
10. Crayons (24 count)
11. Bottle of Elmer's glue (8 oz. size)
12. 5 packages of glue sticks
13. 1 water color paint set
14. Large man's shirt for painting smock

We recycle many household items, e.g. shoeboxes, Pringles cans w/lids, egg cartons, bubble wrap, ribbon, gift wrap, etc. Please send in whatever you think we may be able to use.

Do NOT bring or send toys, candy or money (except for Tzedaka.). Latex balloons are considered dangerous. Please do not send them to school.

THINGS TO BRING -- Kindergarten

1. A complete change of clothes in a labeled shoebox. This should include a shirt, long pants or skirt, underwear and socks. **Please label the clothes with your child's full name.**
2. Please label all sweaters, sweatshirts, raincoats, jackets, mittens and boots with your child's full name.
3. 2 boxes of tissues
4. 2 rolls of paper towels
5. Washable markers, 8 count (fat, classic colors)
6. Crayons (24 count)
7. Colored pencils
8. 2 bottles of Elmer's school glue (8 oz. size)
9. 4 glue sticks
10. 1 bottle of "tacky" glue. (Michael's has it.)
11. Pair of safety scissors
12. Pencil box
13. 1 two-pocket folder
14. Art smock or painting shirt (Dad's old shirt!)
15. 2 current pictures of your child
16. 1 twelve- inch wooden ruler
17. Do **NOT** bring toys, candy or money (except for Tzedaka). Latex balloons are considered dangerous. Please do not send them to school.