

WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Families,

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center was founded as an integral part of a larger community that honors intellectual and spiritual growth; a deep appreciation of the natural environment; a commitment to social action and a deep respect for the diversity of our community.

In Reggio Emilia, community is viewed as one of the most profound protagonists when creating an environment that fosters a love of learning. Community is a platform in which learning is conducted and relationships are cultivated and transformed. Community contains a sense of empathy, a closeness that creates bonds, enabling each member to recognize the *other* and to recognize him or herself in the *other*.

At Temple Emanuel, we value the bonds that we strive to develop. We have placed great emphasis on the respect of what the *other* is. The *other* is within us all. The *other* finds a shared language and communicates through a shared understanding. The *other* is an experience that borrows and lends its way of thinking, of speaking, of reading, of writing, and most importantly, living through the relationships and connections that are authentically happening each and every day.

Our days are rich with multiple experiences that depend upon trust and relationships. The moments we share are meaningful to the development of competencies and capabilities. As a community, we continue to foster a love of learning based on our belief that children possess a natural capacity for joy and wonder.

With that in mind, learning happens best when done in a community.

“...our image of the child is rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent, and most of all, connected to adults and other children...” – Loris Malaguzzi

Here is to a beautiful new year!

Sincerely,

Gary Mayes
Early Childhood Director

Honoring All

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center embraces and welcomes the diversity of our community and encourages everyone to seek meaning and fulfillment through the rich Jewish values of our innovative, progressive Reform community.

We open our doors to everyone, including people of all backgrounds, religions, abilities, sexual orientations, interfaith and same sex couples and families.

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PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

- The foundation of our program is based on creating and maintaining a culture of collaborative learning inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education. As a school community we are committed to values based on the image of the child as curious, competent, and capable of co-constructing knowledge.
- Our commitment at Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is to provide an exceptional early childhood education for all of our children. We are dedicated to exposing our children to the rich Jewish values of Temple Emanuel, which includes respecting the diversity of all of our families.
- We believe that our children benefit from a strong relationship between family and school. Our program is based on the spirit of “community” where children, parents and staff feel a strong sense of partnership and belonging.
- We recognize the unique qualities of individual children and feel that children learn best by being active, experiential learners. We provide a rich environment where children have the opportunity for discovery and growth. We encourage the love of learning and the development of an inquisitive mind.
- We believe that children deserve to grow at their own rate in a warm, joyful and nurturing environment.
- We believe that all children and their families should be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Temple Emanuel ECC Guiding Principles Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education

- **Progettazione – Educational Intentions**
Intentions are a means of focusing an experience, attempting to maximize an opportunity so that the teachers and the children can be aware of each other’s discoveries.
Intentions allow for a more refined ear with which to take in how children are taking in the world or making sense of its complexity.
Each year, we introduce a school- wide intention. Intentions are starting points. Ideally, areas of interest will blossom, providing each individual classroom the opportunity to explore and investigate the greater, school-wide intention, within a uniquely defined and fascinating way.

- **Role of Space – Environment**
 The environment acts as another teacher... the beauty has intention and is designed to provoke children to wonder, engage, challenge, manipulate, dream, express and think.
 Teachers carefully organize space for small and large group exploration and small intimate spaces for one, two or three children.
 Aesthetics – from placement of materials to spaces of interaction – gives value to relationships; physically, emotionally and socially.
- **Role of Time – Exploration & Reflection**
 To be able to slow down, and take our time – provides a platform for listening. Our ability to engage in an open dialogue provides a platform to ask questions and reflect.
 Intentional investigational studies (long and short term) are not fragmented; rather they build upon one another over time. As the children "re-visit" their original work and ideas, time provides the opportunity for new experiences which deepen the knowledge already learned. Time is also important in building and sustaining relationships.
- **Small Group Work – Collaboration**
 Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to talk, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem-solve through group work.
 Collaboration consists among co-teachers, teachers and children, children and children, children and parents, parents and teachers, as well as the community at large.
- **Communication – Documentation**
 Documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children engaged in experiences, their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling and thinking and the children's interpretation of experience are displayed.
- **The Many Languages of Children – Atelier**
 Multiple materials are available to the children. Through gaining experience with various mediums, children learn to express themselves in many ways. Children can learn to express any idea through what is traditionally thought of as artistic media. Because young children are often difficult to decode, giving them multiple media to express themselves ends up making their thoughts much more readable or transparent to a teacher – who can better help them to extend upon and fully develop their theories.

- **The Protagonist – The Child**

This is the way we view children. We see children as competent and capable, as a responsible decision maker, a citizen within our learning community – with rights, instead of needs.

Temple Emanuel ECC Pedagogical Framework

The foundation of Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center program is based on creating and maintaining a culture of collaborative learning inspired by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia and the rich Jewish values of Temple Emanuel.

Through our Reggio-inspired philosophical approach to early childhood education we foster a love of learning through meaningful encounters that are rich in intentionality. Intentions are seen as educational pathways where the children’s natural intellectual curiosity leads planning and the children are collaborators in determining both long and short term investigations.

There is not a scripted curriculum, but rather a framework of intentions (topics of study) based upon classroom discussions. At the core of our program are investigations developed around student interest.

We emphasize small group work, based on a social constructivist model where the child forms a concept of him/herself based on the interaction with others and the learning environment.

The value of learning extends to our staff, and our faculty members are active learners involved in a wide range of professional classes, workshops and seminars. We are also fortunate to have a pedagogical coordinator working in partnership with all of our staff. In addition, we are mentored under the guidance of Dr. Naama Zoran, a developmental psychologist who is the representative from the State of Israel on the board of Reggio Children International.

The role of a Temple Emanuel ECC Teacher is to act as a co-researcher, facilitator or guide; rather than stand in front of the group in a didactic manner and tell them “How Things Are”, they ask guiding questions while listening to children’s thoughts. We help children discover the answers for themselves. We construct knowledge based on questions that spark the interest of the group. We start with a basic medium along the theme, and then use that shared knowledge to inspire more questions, and more interpretations through various

media. This provides for a scaffolding of knowledge that children have built through relationships with materials and constructing intelligence of the specific topic at hand.

The languages of math, science and literacy are learned within the context of investigative studies. We carefully weave knowledge building and learning skills through the systematic practice of being hands on learners. Through purposeful and intentional work, we are helping to construct essential skills and knowledge. Through prompting and support, we use a variety of literary experiences that are interactive and engaging. We engage children through a variety of materials, both textual and artistically expressive, to help build a platform for literacy skills. Children gain exposure to phonetics; making the connection that sounds develop into letters and letters into words, and ultimately words can be identified through text. Children become familiar with attention to print, the structure of literary flow, and the recognition that words can be written and spoken.

Children become confident when given the time to use materials, both artistic and constructive, to develop motor skills. Motor skills, gross and fine, are essential tools that connect learning in multiple ways. Children can master these skills when working with a variety of media, such as painting, drawing, clay manipulation and wire bending.

We utilize those skills to help children complete a learning story, which then bridges the work of intentionality to the understanding and competency of skills. Math and Science skills are fostered and nurtured in the same way. We focus on tools that are developmentally appropriate to encourage scientific thought and understanding. We provide provocations that incorporate the senses and stimulate learning. Our learning environments are designed to allow for children to work, uninterruptedly for prolonged periods of time. Our pedagogical approach to learning is based on values that are respectful to children. Our approach is constructivist and emergent; void of rote and didactic immersion. We strive to create a place of wonder and joy, where childhood is cherished.

BEGINNING PRESCHOOL

We are eager for all of our children to make a successful adjustment to preschool. Talk to your child about school and all of the wonderful things that they have to look forward to. Tell your child about the opportunities that they are going to have to make new friends and explore new things. It is important that you send a strong positive message to your daughter or son: they are competent and capable.

For the first two days of school, two-year olds will come for one hour with a parent. On the second day the children will have lunch here and leave at 12:30. New three-year old students will stay until 1:00 on the first day to ease their transition to a new environment. When it is time for you to leave your son or daughter in the classroom please say a clear and confident goodbye. The teachers will work to engage your child and start to develop a relationship based on comfort and trust.

Children separate from their parents and adjust to school in many different ways. One child runs into the classroom and never looks back. Another may take several weeks to feel comfortable in a new setting. Some children make an easy transition in the beginning and have separation difficulties later in the year. All situations are normal and we are well prepared to help your child in a way that is best for him or her. We are also there to provide any support that you may need.

Parents also separate from their children in different ways. It will be helpful to both you and your child to have a goodbye ritual and reassure your child that he or she is going to have a wonderful day. Your show of confidence will enable your child to do that. We are, of course, flexible in those situations that may need different or special attention.

If you need to check on your child's progress during the day, please feel free to check with a member of our administrative team.

Leadership and Guidance

While each person on the Administrative/Leadership Team has an area of focus, we work in close collaboration and each of us would be happy to answer any of your questions, or direct you to the person who can be most helpful.

- **Director** (*Gary Mayes*) leads the entire educational team and is the primary liaison with the Temple Board of Directors, the Clergy and Senior Staff, TEECC parents and the wider Temple Emanuel Community. The director oversees all school operations including staff supervision; fiscal management and creating and implementing policies and procedures.
- **Pedagogista** (*Melissa Williamson*) primarily focuses on the pedagogical growth of the faculty to ensure that they provide the highest level of learning within the Reggio inspired philosophical approach to early childhood education. Serves as a resource for parents and teachers.

- **Atelierista** primarily focuses on extending the growth and understanding of the use of expressive materials and creative languages to deepen children’s learning in both the classroom and Atelier. Creates and maintains an Atelier that strives to be the heart of the school and ensures that TEECC reflects the value of being an aesthetically rich environment.
- **Assistant Director** (*Laura Enkiri*) coordinates the daily operations of Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center. The assistant director’s many responsibilities include organizing and maintaining all classroom records and student files, scheduling and coordinating events. The assistant director is your primary contact for any questions that you may have concerning the daily operations of our school.

Orientation

We host a “new parent orientation” in the late spring. We encourage you to bring your child for several visits to the school prior to the beginning of the school year. Please call the director and we will be happy to arrange a time.

Security Blankets and “Comfy” Items

If your child needs an item to help her/him make the transition from home smoother, please feel free to send it. This can include a blanket, stuffed animal, or any other item your child needs. Please make sure that it is clearly labeled.

Family Photo

Please bring in a framed family photo. This photo will make your child feel at home and remind us all that we are a partnership with home.

Parent Participation

We welcome and encourage parental involvement in a variety of ways. T’zevet, our parent/teacher team, plans and organizes special events, speakers, and fund-raisers throughout the year. Room parents help to organize activities and disseminate information. We welcome any volunteer help that you can give us.

We have family activities throughout the year. These events are a great opportunity to get to know other families at the preschool and to see your child in action with their school friends. Special events may include Chanukah and Purim celebrations, Passover Seder, Pajama Havdalah, end-of-the year Siyum and other school-wide family events. We also welcome and encourage individual classroom events.

Parents are always welcome for lunch, birthdays or to simply visit. We especially enjoy welcoming guests at our weekly “*Ta’am Shel Shabbat*” (A Taste of Shabbat). Please make arrangements for birthday celebrations with your child’s teacher. We also invite you to participate in classroom activities through-out the year.

Parent Communication

At Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center, we pride ourselves on communication. While the staff can chat with you during morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up, these can be very busy times and the teachers need to focus on the children. For longer conversations, you can call or email during the day. We are always happy to set up a phone conference or a personal conference time with the classroom teacher.

The Director is available to families daily and can be reached by email or phone. He has an open-door policy and is delighted to speak with parents. Please do not hesitate to share feedback, both positive and negative. If the Director is not available, the Assistant Director will be able to provide assistance.

Written Communication

There are a variety of ways that we communicate with parents:

- **Daily Blog** – This daily blog is published each day highlighting a portion of the ongoing work of each class and gives you a glimpse of your child’s day. On Friday, we feature a community-wide story.
- **Shutterfly Photo Site** – Teacher’s post photos and video documentation of the children’s work and activities on this site.
- **Documentation Panels**– Are placed throughout the school and classrooms and makes your children’s learning visible through photos and narrative.
- **Notes, Notices and Updates** –Some hard-copy notes are sent home, but most are emailed.
- **Family Directory** – this includes addresses and telephone numbers. If you prefer that your name not be included, please let us know.
- **Email** – Each teaching team has a TEECC email address for communication. Please keep in mind that it may be difficult for faculty to check mail during the day, but we will always get back to you as soon as we can. The address starts with the prefix ecc, the name of the class, @gmail.com For instance: eccalonim@gmail.com or eccdaliot@gmail.com
- **Kol Kore** – The synagogue newsletter is published monthly and focuses on all aspects of the congregation.
- **Website** – There is a section dedicated to the preschool at www.templeemanuelmd.org.
- **Facebook Page** – The Temple Emanuel ECC has its own Facebook page and features highlights of our program.

Other Communication

- Open Door Policy – We have an open door policy for parents. You may drop in any day, at any time, to join in our activities. Please remember at this time that the teachers must focus on the children, so please do not use this as a time for a conference.
- Parent Conferences – Formal individual meetings are scheduled during the winter. However, when a parent or teacher feels that it is necessary, we are happy to arrange a meeting.
- New School Year Reception/Classroom Meetings – These are opportunities for parents to hear about the school’s objectives, goals and purposes. It is an excellent opportunity to meet other parents in your child’s classroom.
- T’zevet Meetings – These meetings may feature a speaker or program or help provide resources for our children. We welcome suggestions and encourage all parents to participate.

Contacting the School

- If you need to reach the school during the day you may call the main number at 301-942-2000 and ask for the preschool.
- If your phone call is urgent and you can not get through to the school, please ask to speak with someone in the administrative office of the Temple and they will be glad to assist you.
- We are concerned when your child is not in school. Please send an email to your child’s teachers and lenkiri@templemanuelmd.org if your child will be absent. This is also important in tracking illness. If we see a pattern in a particular classroom or throughout the entire school, we will send an email alerting parents.
- We also like to know of any good (or sadly, bad) news that is happening in your family. It helps us to better care for your child. Sometimes, something as simple as a Grandparent leaving after a visit, can affect your child’s mood. Please be assured that if news is private, we value confidentiality.

Issues, Concerns and Feedback

If you have an issue or concern, you are encouraged to address problems in a direct way with the person or people that you are have a challenge with. If you feel that you have not been successful in a reaching resolution, you are encouraged to speak with the Preschool Director. If you require further assistance, you may contact the chairperson of the ECC Advisory Board, who serves as a representative on the Temple’s Board of Directors.

All financial matters should be addressed with Temple’s Executive Director.

We are all part of one community and we therefore have responsibilities to one another and hope that feedback and conflicts can always be handled in a positive and respectful way.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is open year round from 7:30 am – 6:00 pm. The preschool is licensed for children ages 2 – 5, therefore, a child must have had his/her second birthday in order to start preschool.

Application Process for New Students

A one-time application form must be submitted with a non-refundable \$75 application fee. We give both synagogue members, and siblings, registration priority. Priority is given to full-time students. If you are offered and accept a spot, you will be sent a contract which must be signed and returned with a one-time \$500 deposit.

All currently enrolled children are guaranteed enrollment for the following school year, provided parents return the annual contract and all required fees by the specified deadline. Payment of fees must be current in order to re-enroll a child. For Temple members, membership fees must also be current.

In December, parents of currently enrolled children will receive a contract for the upcoming school year. In order to guarantee your child's spot for the upcoming year, parents must include the activity fee with the signed contract. *Tuition is an annual amount that is broken down into either 10 or 12 payments for the convenience of our families.* The deposit is a one-time \$500 fee that will be returned to you at the completion of your child's contracted time at TEECC. Families enrolled for 12 months will make monthly payments from September through August. Families enrolled for 10 months will make payments from September through June.

Enrollment Forms to be Submitted:

- Family-Child Information Form
- Emergency Information Form
- Health Inventory Form
- Immunization Certificate
- Medical Attention Release Form
- Photo Release Form
- Sunscreen Permission Form
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Tuition Contract and Application
- Signed receipt of MSDE "Guide to Regulated Child Care"
- If applicable: Medication Authorization Form, Allergy Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan

For your child's safety, if there is a change in address, home or work phone numbers, emergency contacts or caregiver, please notify us in writing immediately.

Medical Immunization and Health Forms

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that all immunization and health forms be completed by a physician and submitted before a child may enter school. All children must receive appropriate vaccines and a lead test. Allergy Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan, and Medication Authorization forms must also be completed if applicable.

Billing and Contracts

All fees and tuition are non-refundable. Families are required to pay tuition for their entire contracted period of time. Deposits will be returned after the end of the contract less any funds owed to Temple Emanuel.

At the beginning of each year you will receive a confirmation of your contract with the amount of your annual tuition broken down into equal monthly payments. Tuition is due at the first of each month. If you do not pay by the 5th of the month, you will be assessed a late fee of \$30. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month your child will not be able to attend school until payment is made. If payment is not made by the end of the month, your child will be withdrawn from the preschool.

Monthly payments can be made by check, ACH or credit card. There is a 2.5% fee for credit card payment.

We can't make changes to your child's schedule. Our staff schedule and annual budget are based on the numbers of children that we have at given times. There may be instances that we can extend a child from a part-day to a full-day schedule, but that is up to the discretion of the director and based on staff ratio.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Preschool will be closed for the following Jewish holidays:

Erev Rosh Hashanah – 3:00 dismissal	Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah
Rosh Hashanah – two days	Passover – mini-break
Kol Nidre – 3:00 dismissal	Last day of Passover - closed
Yom Kippur	Shavuot
Sukkot	

As you may know, the Hebrew year runs on a lunar calendar, which varies from the solar secular calendar. Therefore, each year, the Jewish holidays are celebrated on different days on the secular calendar. Observance of Jewish holidays starts at sundown.

We invite all of our families to join us for monthly Tot-Shabbats and our family preschool service on Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah.

The Preschool will close on the following federal holidays:

Labor Day	Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)	President's Day
Christmas Day	Memorial Day
New Year's Day	Independence Day (July 4)

We will also close one day in the fall for professional development and one day in the winter for parent/teacher conferences.

In addition, we are closed for winter break between Christmas and New Years Day. A short mini-break is scheduled to coincide with Passover. We are also closed for a week at the end of the current school year for teacher training and preparation for the upcoming school year.

Diversity and respect are important values in our community. While we do not celebrate Christmas or other religious holidays that are not part of our Jewish tradition, we encourage all of our children to share their stories about their family traditions and rituals with us. In our school we do not celebrate Halloween or Valentine's Day.

ECC HOURS/PICK-UP POLICY

Arrival

Our school opens at 7:30 am. Children can bring breakfast and we always have a "breakfast table" set up in our opening room. It is very important that every child arrives by 9:00 am so that children can orient themselves each day and not miss meeting and key moments of intentional learning.

If your child will be late due to an appointment, please let us know.

Dismissal and School Grounds

School opens at 7:30 am and we close promptly at 6:00 pm. It is extremely important that you arrive on time to pick up your child. Late pick-ups can cause anxiety for the children involved. It also often creates problems for the teachers on duty. In addition, we are not licensed to care for children after 6:00 pm.

MSDE REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT YOU SIGN YOUR CHILD IN EACH MORNING AND OUT EACH DAY. We must have those for our records (and your child's safety). If someone else picks up your child, please let them know. Minor siblings cannot sign children in or out.

We recommend that you plan to be at the Center earlier than pickup to allow yourself adequate time for unexpected traffic, a brief chat with the staff and time to exit the building.

For your child's security he or she may only be picked up by those individuals listed on your emergency authorization form. If you have not personally introduced us to this person, we will ask for identification.

The preschool requires written notification whenever the usual person is not picking up your child. For example, if a visiting grandparent or other relative is visiting, we must have written notification. This policy also includes carpooling or any other temporary pick-up arrangements.

Many parents have worked out arrangements with other families to be able to pick up their children in cases of emergency. If you expect to be late, please add those parents' names to your child's emergency authorization form. If this person will be picking your child up, please call the school and let us know. This way, we can let your child know who is picking him or her up. If we do not have formal permission, we will not release your child to another parent and you will be charged a late fee.

We understand that emergencies can happen, and ask that you call us at 301-942-2000 in the event that this happens.

Late Pick-Up Fee

In the event that a parent or caregiver arrives late, there will be a late fee charged for both the 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm pick-up times.

The fees are as follows:

- \$5 a minute for the first infraction
- \$10 a minute for the second infraction
- \$15 a minute for the a third infraction
- If there is a continued pattern of lateness, parents will need to meet with the Temple Emanuel ECC Advisory Board

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Items to bring from Home

- Nap/Rest items – blanket, pillow, cot sheet (crib sheets fit perfectly), and a “lovie.
- Water Bottle
- Rain Boots/Snow Boots
- For children in diapers – diapers, wipes and cream if needed (must have a doctor's note)
- Sunscreen
- Allergy Medications if needed – Benadryl, epi pen etc. (with doctor's note)
- Change of Clothing
- A framed family photo

Faculty & Staff

All of our staff members are carefully chosen based upon the special qualities, experience and talents that they have to offer to the children in our program. As a school that is inspired by the philosophy of Reggio-Emilia, we believe strongly in working together as a collaborative team. Each classroom has two-co-teachers and we also have an Assistant Director, a *Pedagogista* (Curriculum Specialist) and *Atelierista* (Studio Specialist) as part of our educational team.

We also have “float” faculty members with the same status, qualifications and experience as our teachers who are assigned to specific classes. The “float” teachers serve a very important role in our school. They know all of the children, the routines and intentional work in every classroom. When teachers are absent they serve as co-teachers, they work in classrooms when teachers are in team-meetings or are a third teacher in a room when one is needed. They are active participants and contributors to all that we do in our school.

We also believe that as educators, it is important for our teaching staff to be dedicated learners themselves. Temple Emanuel strongly supports staff development and we participate in many opportunities for continuing education and professional development throughout the year. A number of our staff participated in learning seminars in Reggio Emilia. Many hold leadership positions and are active participants in both local and national Jewish ECC professional organizations and others such as the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance and the DC Reggio Emilia Alliance.

All of our teachers meet the Maryland State Department of Education licensing requirement and exceed the necessary qualifications. All hold degrees in Education or a related field and are well acquainted with Jewish values and traditions. Each member of our faculty brings their own unique talents and gifts to us.

All staff must have a background and finger-print check and health form completed. They are also CPR and First Aid trained. Several of our staff are certified in Medical Administration, and all have Security Training.

Throughout the year staff members are formally and informally observed and provided with opportunities for professional growth and constructive feedback. While we are proud of our hard working staff, there may be rare situations when a staff member’s contract must be terminated or not renewed for the coming school year. The decision may be based on either personal or professional reasons. Details of termination are governed by the protocol of human resources and cannot be shared with the public. We will inform families of changes as appropriate.

The Early Childhood Director is responsible for overall administration in cooperation with the Board of Trustees of Temple Emanuel. In the Director’s absence, the *Pedagogista* and/or the Assistant Director will be responsible for overseeing the school.

The administrative staff of the synagogue is responsible for all preschool billing and financial record keeping. You may contact any of them if you have questions about financial issues.

Discipline and Guidance

Our guidance and discipline philosophy is based on our approach to teaching young children. We focus on fostering problem-solving skills, enabling children to solve problems with their peers, and on helping children build positive relationships. This reinforces our belief in and respect for the capability of children.

The Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center recognizes that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. While some behaviors may be typical for a specific “age and stage” we recognize that children learn appropriate social behaviors at different rates. With that in mind, we observe and make individual behavior plans when necessary.

Our staff provides a positive model of behavior by treating children, parents, and one another with friendliness, care, and respect. We ask that all who enter our preschool help support the guidance of children by also providing a positive model of behavior, as well. Reflecting our strong belief in the competence and capability of children, we work with them to help them plan strategies to handle conflict, to problem solve, and make positive choices.

We focus on good behavior, rather than bad. We may need to redirect a child and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm, but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove the child from the rest of the group so that we may speak with them privately or simply give them an opportunity to be in a quiet, peaceful place.

If a behavior persists, we will contact the child’s parents and ask them to come in for a conference. At that step we will work in conjunction with the family and teaching staff on a behavior management plan that meets the needs of that particular child. If there is continued concern, it is also our practice and policy, to consult with specialists who work with children and families. This must always be done in partnership with parents.

As part of the synagogue community, we believe in working with families during difficult times. We in turn ask for the family’s cooperation and assistance so that we may be able to continue our relationship with them. If we are unable to make progress in improving a child’s behavior, we may need to assess the appropriateness of our program for that particular child.

In the event that one child consistently harasses another, either verbally or physically, we will contact the parents of both children. When there is a continued problem affecting the welfare of the entire class, parents will be informed about how the issue is being addressed.

When a child hurts another child, we will first attend to the child that has been hurt and then speak with the other child. In the case of a bite or an injury where we must apply first aid, we will call the parents of both children. A written incident report will also be sent home.

Partnering With Families When Children Need or Receive Support

We recognize that all children grow and develop on their own trajectory, but there may be times that we realize a child is having a specific challenge or delay in reaching certain developmental milestones. At that time we may suggest that your child be assessed or evaluated by a diagnostic professional. As a learning community we are committed to supporting all of our children and families in the best way possible and must have the best information available to be able to do that. We believe in early intervention and partner with families and specialists who provide the services a child may need.

If your child is already receiving services from Infant and Toddlers, Child Find or a private provider, it is imperative that you supply that information to us so that we can help you build a solid foundation for your child.

Reporting Abuse

In Maryland, the child abuse law requires that anyone who suspects a child is being mistreated must report the matter to Protective Services or the police. "Notwithstanding any law on privileged communications, each health worker who has reason to believe that the child is neglected or abused, shall notify the relevant authorities and if acting as staff of a hospital, public health agency, childcare institution, school or similar institution, notify immediately the head of the institution or the designee of the head. Any person who in good faith makes a report of abuse or neglect is immune from any civil liability or criminal penalty."

Birthdays

Birthdays are special times in our lives. It is an important part of our school culture to share your child's special occasion with his or her classmates. We encourage the focus of the day to be on the birthday child, rather than on the snack. TEECC has established a wonderful birthday tradition. Each year, the children in the class make and present a "gift" for the birthday child that is based on the year's intention. That "gift" represents the child and becomes a permanent part of the classroom for the rest of the year.

With an emphasis on good eating habits, we encourage healthy birthday treats. Please contact your child's teacher in advance to plan for this. Please do not send in "goody bags." Balloons are prohibited.

A very special way to celebrate your child's birthday is to donate a book to the class to remember the occasion.

Please be sensitive to all children's feelings when sending out invitations to parties. Invitations may be distributed in school only if the entire class is invited.

Bringing Items from Home

Please make sure that everything brought in from home is LABELED, and that no belonging is extremely valuable. Children can be very upset when a "favorite" item is lost. Also, please make certain that no toy weapons or items that are not age appropriate are brought from

home into school. All items from home must be small enough to fit into your child's cubby drawer.

We do appreciate when parents send in a book or item that is relevant to a topic that the children are focusing on. Just let the teacher know that you are sending an item in.

Clothing

When planning your child's preschool wardrobe, remember that children often get dirty using paint and other hands-on material or playing outdoors. They can also have toilet accidents. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for children to get in and out of and something that they would not feel badly about getting soiled.

Please send in a change of clothes to keep in your child's cubby in case they need to change during the day. These should include diapers (if your child wears them), pull-ups (if you have begun toilet training), or underwear, shirts, pants, and socks.

Labeling is extremely important. Please, keep track of these clothes and their seasonal appropriateness. We take the children outdoors in all types of weather. Raincoats with hoods/hats, boots, warm snow apparel, and sneakers (not party shoes or shoes which do not provide support) are all essential, depending upon outdoor temperatures and conditions. In the summer, children need swim suits, towels and appropriate shoes for water-play.

Shoes should be comfortable and safe for running, climbing and playing outdoors. If your child would like to wear a "special" pair of shoes to school, please send in a pair of safe playground shoes that can be kept in your child's cubby.

Flow of the Day

Our daily routine is intentionally based on a "flow" rather than a strict schedule. This allows the children and teachers time to explore, create theories and reflect, without the pressure of the clock. A flow allows the group to follow the rhythm of the individual class community. A typical day includes:

- Welcoming friends/Choice Time
- Morning Meeting –conversations about ongoing classwork, sharing experiences, open-ended dialogue (*Ta'am Shel Shabbat* on Friday)
- Small group work – collaborative, intentional work. Small groups may work in the Atelier or the library
- Snack – two year olds usually have a group snack, threes and fours have an open-snack, where a snack table is set-up and they may choose to eat when they are hungry
- Outdoor Time/Garden Work
- Reflection Meeting
- Lunch
- Story
- Nap/Rest Time – Fours have quiet activities
- Afternoon snack

- Choice time
- Outdoor Time (we use the Kikar or Social Hall in bad weather)
- Story

Outdoor Play and Learning

We are very fortunate to be surrounded by the beautiful space of Gan Emanuel and we view our outdoor environment as another classroom. We go outdoors as often as we can throughout the entire year. We plant and tend to our gardens, play in the snow, dig for worms and discover the natural world around us. Please remember this in planning your child's wardrobe. Every child should have snow boots, hats, gloves and warm coats for winter weather. Raingear is important for rainy days and we ask that you keep a pair of rain boots in school at all times.

Napping

As a school licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education, all children are required to nap or rest every day. Once children are in the "threes" their nap routines may change. In the beginning of the year, all three-year olds must rest for the first hour of our two-hour rest period. If they are not asleep after the first hour, they will then go to the "wake-up" room where there are quiet activities. Later in the year non-nappers may opt to be in "*menucha*" where the children have a short rest and then continue with activities. Children in the "fours" begin the year with "*menucha*" time. If needed, parents may always request that their child take a nap if they are in the fours.

It is our policy that we do not wake sleeping children or prevent children from sleeping who are clearly fatigued.

Each child will have her/his own-labeled rest-time cot. Please send in a washable, size-appropriate, labeled blanket and a crib-sheet that remain at the Preschool for rest-time and will be sent home on Friday afternoons for washing.

Field Trips and Site Visits

Advance notice of trips will always be given. Transportation may be provided by parents or at times, we may contract with a school transportation company.

School Photographs

Professional school photographs are taken once a year. Individual as well as class pictures are sent home in packets and can be purchased from the photographer.

Throughout the school year teachers will take pictures of preschool activities. We post these candid action shots on our documentation boards and our Shutterfly account. Occasionally, Temple Emanuel will use these photographs in our newsletter and our promotional literature. A photo permission release form is a part of the paperwork that is filled out in the beginning of your child's enrollment.

Ta'am Shel Shabbat (A Taste of Shabbat)

The preschool celebrates a “*Ta'am Shel Shabbat - A Taste of Shabbat*” every Friday morning. It is a special day in our week. We celebrate and remember this day of rest that separates Shabbat from the week. Every Friday morning we gather in the Kikar for Shabbat songs led by Cantor Lindsay, and a special story read by our teachers or guests. We then return to our classrooms for blessings over the candles and a special Shabbat snack of challah and grape juice. We always welcome and encourage parents and special guests to join us.

SHABBAT CANDLES: Blessing over the candles

Baruch atah A-donay, Eloheinu Melech Ha'Olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik neir shel Shabbat.

Blessed are you God, who sanctifies us with commandments and commands us to light the candles of Shabbat.

HAGAFEN: Blessing over grape juice or wine

Baruch atah A-donay, Elo-heinu Melech Ha'Olam borei pri hagafen.

Blessed are You God, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

HAMOTZI: Blessing for bread

Baruch atah A-donay, Elo-heinu Melech Ha'Olam Hamotzi lechem min haaretz.

Blessed are You God Who brings forth bread from the earth.

Temple Emanuel also has a monthly Tot Shabbat that is held on Friday evening or Saturday morning. All members of our community and their friends are invited to participate. Please check the Temple Emanuel website for the monthly schedule.

Jewish Holidays and Values

At Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center we offer a program rich with Jewish traditions, holiday celebrations and a major focus on values. Values include: *Hachnasat Orchim* - Welcoming Guests; *Tikkun Olam* – Repairing the World; *Derech Eretz* – Courtesy and Respect; *Kavod* – Kindness; *Bal Tashcheet* – To not Destroy Needlessly; *Tzedakah* – Justice and Charity. The holidays and values are woven into our daily lives throughout the year.

Toilet Training

We understand that most two year olds are not toilet trained and this is not a requirement at Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center. When your child is ready, we work closely with the parent and child to toilet train the child in a consistent, calming, encouraging manner. We celebrate success and keep a positive upbeat attitude when the child has an “accident.” The parent and school should follow a consistent and similar schedule or the child’s training will be erratic. Your child’s teachers will keep you posted on progress- please keep us abreast of all news, for example, when your child comes to Preschool with only underwear on!

Parents need to provide the school with diapers, wipes, and latex gloves for their child. Please bring a large size package of each to leave at school. The staff will let you know when you need to replenish.

FOOD POLICY

We follow the *Kashrut* policy of Temple Emanuel. No pork or shellfish products are permitted.

Peanuts and Tree Nuts* *(Please see complete list in the appendix)*

We provide a “nut-free” environment for our children. Therefore, ***no peanut or tree-nut products are permitted***. A peanut/nut allergy can be life-threatening and it is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for all of our children.

Temple Emanuel strives to maximize the health and safety of each person in our community who may be subject to a life-threatening allergic reaction. In that spirit, we have instituted the following nut policy:

The entire downstairs school wing is nut free. We ask that foods used or sent in for snack, lunch, or any other reason should be checked to make sure they are nut free.

The remainder of the facility is nut sensitive, meaning there can be no nuts in any ingredients in any food on the premises. The items do not have to be certified nut free or made in a nut free facility. Because this area is nut sensitive not nut free, we cannot guarantee that those who have nut allergies are totally protected.

Breakfast

Children who arrive for early morning are welcome to bring their breakfast with them and may eat in the opening classroom.

Lunches

Lunches should be brought each day in clearly labeled bags or lunch boxes. Lunches will be put in the refrigerator. Thermoses (labeled) may be brought, but the staff cannot heat foods. You can include a drink in your child’s lunch, and we always have water available...

Please remember to alert us to any food allergies.

We strongly suggest keeping sugared foods to the bare minimum. We ask that you do not pack candy in your child’s lunch or send it in to share with others.

To aid your child’s feeling of independence and to help alleviate confusion during lunchtime, please peel eggs and fruit, cut grapes, etc. Please pack a spoon or fork when necessary.

Snacks

Nutritious snacks will be provided in the morning and afternoon. We feel that it is important to promote healthy eating and our snack menu is based on the recommendations of a registered dietician who specializes in the health of young children. We serve organic milk and items such as low-fat cheese and whole-wheat crackers, fresh fruit, vegetables and hummus, rice-cakes and sugar-free apple butter, whole-grain cereal and plain low-fat yogurt . The children

participate in preparing snack and we have cooking opportunities throughout the year, often using produce from our own garden.

On Friday morning we have challah and grape juice to celebrate “Ta’am Shel Shabbat”

If your child has special dietary needs, it is important that you inform us. Parents often supply individual snack boxes for children who have severe food allergies or intolerances.

Please see the Appendix for the Temple Emanuel Nut Policy.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH

Medical Forms

Medical and immunization forms completed by your child's physician must be on file in the school office prior to the first day of school. All children should have the following immunizations:

- 4 DPT
- 3 Polio
- 1 MMR
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 1 Hib and 1 Varicella

In addition, all families must submit written documentation of blood-lead screening.

Illness Policy

Illness is difficult for everyone and it is often a hard decision whether or not to send your child to school. For the protection of the health and well being of all children and staff at the preschool, our policy is based on the understanding that ill children should be kept home if they are:

- Contagious and their presence at school represents a health risk to other children
- Uncomfortable - Illness can make a child feel miserable. The rule of thumb is that if a child is "feeling under the weather" the child should be kept at home where they can be comfortable and their individual needs can be taken care of.

Guidelines:

- **FEVER:** A child with a fever is to be excluded until fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours. A fever is defined as a rectal temperature greater than 100 degrees. Children who are sent home with a fever may not return to school the following day.
- **STREP THROAT:** Your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotics have been started and the child is fever free for 24 hours.
- **VOMITING, DIARRHEA:** Vomiting and diarrhea generally indicate an active intestinal infection. Diarrhea is best defined as a significant increase in the frequency of normal bowel movements. Children may return to school if there is no vomiting for a minimum of 24 hours, and the frequency of bowel movements is returning to normal.
- **COLDS:** A cold's symptoms are described as an irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes and sneezing. A cold may or may or may not include a fever. Children are often most contagious in the early, runny stage of a cold. Minor nasal congestion or cough should not result in exclusion, but if a child is running a fever or is feeling miserable, they should be kept home.

- CONJUNCTIVITIS (Pink Eye): Bacterial: Your child may return to school after antibiotic treatment has begun and eye ooze has stopped. Viral: May return with doctor's note that child is no longer contagious.
- HEAD LICE: Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center follows the guidelines of Montgomery County Schools, which at this time states that a child may return to school after being treated. In order to keep outbreaks to a minimum, we ask parents to carefully follow hair-combing procedures after treatment.
- IMPETIGO: Your child may return to school if she or he has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours and shows definite improvement.

Notification of Illness

Please notify us as soon as possible when your child is ill. You can leave a message on the phone line or contact us by email. This will enable us to know if there is a pattern of illness such as strep-throat, stomach virus, conjunctivitis or the flu and in turn, inform parents.

Please do not request that a child remain indoors. If your child is too ill to go outside with us, he or she is too ill to be at Preschool.

Medication

Maryland licensing regulations stipulates the following requirements:

- PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS: A parent must administer the first dose of any medication at least 2 hours before bringing the child to school. All medication that needs to be administered to your child at Preschool requires an accompanying note from the prescribing doctor. The note can be made on the prescription pad or a simple handwritten one with the signature and date of visit clearly visible.

The medication must be in its original prescription bottle and must be accompanied by the appropriate measurement spoon.

- OVER THE COUNTER AND HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES: Can only be administered to your child with a note from your child's doctor.
- ALLERGIES: If your child has allergies, we must be informed of treatment protocol with your child's history, symptoms and reactions. These will be posted in the classroom and kept in the student folder.
- EPI PENS: If an Epi pen is used, we must have a note from the doctor and specific directions. Epi pens will be kept in the classroom emergency bag. We also suggest that you have a second one to keep in the administrator's office as back up. Epi-pens must be in the original box from the pharmacy.

- SUNSCREEN AND INSECT REPELLENT may be applied at school with signed permission from parents. Ingredients vary from brand to brand and we ask that you have a trial at home, before sending it in.
- CREAM OR MEDICATION FOR DIAPER RASH: we can apply these if they are used on a daily basis. If they are used as a treatment for a rash or infection, we must have a doctor's note.

Please do not leave any medication, skin cream or sunscreen in your child's bag

SECURITY, SAFETY AND BUILDING PROCEDURES

Security

The Temple Emanuel community takes security concerns seriously and, as necessary, plans are reevaluated when specific concerns arise. We will keep parents up-to-date when specific situations arise. The emergency procedure plan is evaluated and administered by the Temple Emanuel Board and its Security Committee.

Families should enter the school through the doorway that faces the side parking lot. The preschool doors are locked at all times but can be exited in the case of an emergency. Parents will be given an individual code to enter the doors from the parking lot and another code to enter the preschool hallway. Please do not share this code.

For security reasons, we ask that adults only use the keypad to enter the building. Please do not give the code to your children or allow them to enter the numbers into the keypad.

For those who need, we have handicap access to and from the building. Please, use these handicap buttons only if you need them. We talk to the children about the purpose of the handicap access and appreciate that you reinforce this.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE DOORS BE SECURELY CLOSED BEHIND YOU!

Evacuations

In the event of an emergency that requires that we evacuate we will exit the building through the doors closest to the classroom. There are three emergency exits on the school level. These are the doors adjacent to the parking lot, at the end of the hallway and indoor play area. Our gathering place is on the side of the building at Dresden Avenue.

In the event that the preschool needs to evacuate the building, children and teachers will conduct themselves as if it were a fire alarm. Teachers have been given previous instruction of

the different fire routes out of the school and a fire-drill will be held monthly. In the case that children and staff cannot return to the building they will be brought next door to the Warner Presbyterian Memorial Church.

Teachers carry copies of your child's emergency information form in the classroom backpack. This pack remains with the teacher at all times when children are out of the building.

In the event that we need to "shelter in place" emergency supplies will be stored in an accessible area. We have both fire and emergency drills throughout the year.

Parking

Families may use the designated spaces in the lot adjacent to the preschool. We have a busy parking lot and it is important to exercise caution when you are both in your car and walking through the lot. Please follow the directions indicated when entering and leaving the parking lot. Please don't park right in front of the doors. This area needs to be kept clear for emergencies.

Snow Policy

It is our sincere hope that we will be able to remain open throughout the winter. However, there may be conditions that force us to close for safety reasons. Our decisions are always based on the safety of our children, parents, and staff.

Our policy regarding closings is determined by a number of factors:

- If the Federal Government is closed for any reason, the preschool will be closed
- TEECC will check the decisions of MCPS Childcare Centers and Montgomery County Administrative Offices and may use that as a guideline for closing.
- The decision to close preschool may also be based on safety conditions of the areas surrounding Temple Emanuel. If road conditions are hazardous, we will close the preschool. A decision will be made by 6:30 am and we will inform parents through a "Voice Shot" message. In addition, a message will be posted on the Temple Emanuel ECC Facebook page.
- At times we may have a delayed opening. Most often this will be at 9:00 a.m. If it is a different time, we will announce it through "Voice Shot."
- If we begin to experience inclement weather during the day, we will endeavor to remain open. Should we determine that it is necessary to close, we will notify parents and you will have a two hour window in which to arrive at school. It is important for you to arrange to pick up your child as soon as possible, as chances are that weather conditions will continue to deteriorate.

These policies will also pertain to other emergency conditions such as hurricanes, power outages or problems with the building.

APPENDIX

TEMPLE EMANUEL – Nut Policy

Temple Emanuel strives to maximize the health and safety of each person in our community who may be subject to a life-threatening allergic reaction. In that spirit, we have instituted the following nut policy:

The entire downstairs school wing is nut free. We ask that foods used or sent in for snack, lunch, or any other reason should be checked to make sure they are nut free.

The remainder of the facility is nut sensitive, meaning there can be no nuts in any ingredients in any food on the premises. The items do not have to be certified nut free or made in a nut free facility. Because this area is nut sensitive not nut free, we cannot guarantee that those who have nut allergies are totally protected.

You MUST avoid foods with any of the following ingredients:

Almonds	Marzipan
Almond Milk	Mixed Nuts
Artificial Nuts	Mortadella
Beechnuts	Nangai Nuts
Beer Nuts	Nougat
Black Walnuts	Nut Butters
Brazil Nuts	Nut Extracts/Flavoring
Bush Nuts	Nut Flours/Meal
Butternuts	Nut Meats
Cashews	Nutella
Chestnuts	Nut Milks
Chinquapin Nuts	Nut Oils
Coconut	Nut Pastes
Energy/Protein Bars	Peanuts
Filberts	Peanut Butter
Gianduja	Peanut Flour
Gingko Nuts	Peanut Oil
Granola/Granola Bars	Pecans
Goobers	Pesto
Ground Nuts	Pine Nuts
Hazelnuts	Pistachio Nuts
Hickory Nuts	Pralines
Lychee Nuts	Shea Nuts
Macadamia Nuts	Walnuts