

Temple Emanuel
Early Childhood Center



Parent Handbook
2019 - 2020

Letter from the Interim Director

Dear Families,

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center (ECC) was founded as an integral part of the larger Reform Jewish Temple Emanuel 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 our learning practices and our relationships with one another in the ECC, we are inspired by the Reggio Approach to early childhood education. Our experiences are guided by the principles of citizenship and the rights of children and are touched by kindness, care, collaboration and inclusion – all important components of being a citizen in a community of learners. We take value in honoring all through understanding and deep relationships; developing community through compassion and respect; and instilling a sense of openness to explore, learn and create. Each day brings new discoveries, friendships and joy!

We look forward to getting to know you - welcome to our community!

Sincerely,

Melissa Williamson
Interim Director, Early Childhood

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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EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER PHILOSOPHY

- Our program is based on the spirit of community where children, parents and staff feel a strong sense of partnership and belonging. We aim to create and maintain a culture of collaborative learning inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education.
- We are committed to: (1) values based on the image of the child as curious, competent, and capable of co-constructing knowledge; (2) providing an exceptional early childhood education for all children; (3) exposing our children to the rich Jewish values of Temple Emanuel.
- We believe that children learn best by being active, experiential learners. We provide a rich environment in which children have the opportunity for discovery and growth. We encourage the love of learning and the development of the inquisitive mind.
- We believe that children have the right to grow at their own pace 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.

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 relate to the world and make 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.
- **Environment**
The environment acts as another teacher. The school's aesthetics have intention and the environment is designed to provoke children to wonder, engage, challenge, manipulate, dream, express and think. Teachers carefully organize space for large and small group exploration. From placement of materials to spaces of interaction, the set-up of the environment gives value to relationships; physically, emotionally and socially.
- **Role of Time – Exploration and Reflection**
The ability to slow our pace 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 are not fragmented; rather they build upon one another over time. As the children revisit their original work and idea, 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 occurs among co-teachers, teachers and children, children and children, children and parents, parents and teachers, as well as the community at large.
- **Documentation – Communication**
Documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for

children, teachers, and parents. Photos of children engaged in experiences, their words written out as they discuss what they are doing, feeling and thinking, and the children's interpretation of experiences are displayed to make learning visible.

- **The Many Languages of Children – Atelier**

Multiple materials are available to 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**

We see children as competent and capable, as a responsible decision maker, a citizen within our learning community, with rights instead of needs. Children are the protagonists of their learning.

BEGINNING PRESCHOOL

- **Two-year old students:** For the first two days of school, two-year old students will come for one hour with a parent. On the second day the children will stay through lunch and leave at 12:30pm.
- **Three-year old students:** New three-year old students will stay until 1:00pm 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 develop a relationship based on comfort and trust.

Children separate from their parents and adjust to school in many ways. One child may run into the classroom and never look 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 is helpful for you and your child to have a goodbye ritual and to 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. If you need to check on your child's progress during the day, please feel free to check with a member of our Leadership team.

Leadership and Guidance

While each person on the 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:** leads the entire educational team and is the primary liaison with the Temple Board of Directors, the Clergy and the 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.
- **Assistant Director:** coordinates the ECC daily operations. The Assistant Director's many responsibilities include organizing and maintaining all classroom records and student files, scheduling and coordinating events and family engagement.
- **Pedagogista:** 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 values of being an aesthetically rich environment.

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 to visit.

Security Blankets and “Comfy” Items

If your child needs an item to help him/her make the transition from home smoother, please feel free to send it in. 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. Room parents help to organize activities and disseminate information. We welcome any volunteer help that you can give us.

ECC family events are a great opportunity to get to know other ECC families and to see your child in action with their school friends. Special events may include Chanukah and Purim celebrations, end-of-the-year Siyum, ECC Family Picnic, Parent Coffee Hours and other school-wide 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 throughout the year.

ECC Advisory Board

The ECC Advisory Board is comprised of ECC parents, faculty and the ECC Director. The Chairperson of the ECC Advisory Board is parent Lisa Zelermyer (lzelermeyer@gmail.com). The Advisory Board’s mission is to foster deeper connections among the Director of the ECC, ECC families, and the larger congregation of Temple Emanuel. The Advisory Board serves as a resource for the Director of the ECC and for ECC families and promotes the best interests of the ECC to the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees. The Chair of the ECC Advisory Board is an Ex-Officio Voting Member of the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees.

Parent Communication

The Director is available to families daily and can be reached by email or phone. If the Director is not available, the Assistant Director will be able to assist you. While faculty can chat with you during morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up, these can be very busy times that the teachers need to focus on the children. For longer conversations, please call or email during the day. We are always happy to set up a phone conference or a personal conference time with the classroom teachers.

Written Communication

We communicate and share information with parents in a variety of ways:

- **Daily Blog:** published each day highlighting a portion of the ongoing work of each class, giving a glimpse of your child’s day. On Fridays, we feature a community-wide narrative from the Atelierista or Pedagogista. <http://templeemanuelecc.wordpress.com/>
- **Emails from Director:** Monday emails from the Director feature an overview of happenings of the upcoming week, notes and reminders. Friday emails from the Director feature a brief summary of Ta’am Shel Shabbat, highlights from the week and notes and reminders. Some hard-copy notes and special event announcements are sent home, but most are emailed.

- **Faculty Email:** each classroom's teaching team has a TEECC email address for communication. The address starts with the ecc prefix, the name of the class, @gmail.com. (e.g. eccdaliot@gmail.com). It may be difficult for faculty to check email during the day, but they will get back to you as soon as they can. For time-sensitive emails to teachers, please copy the Director (mwilliamson@templemanuelmd.org) so we can attend to your inquiry as soon as possible.
- **Documentation Panels:** placed throughout the ECC, printed documentation makes children's learning visible through photos and narratives.
- **Facebook:** Temple Emanuel ECC has its own Facebook page that features regularly updated highlights of our program. Search: Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center
- **Shutterfly:** teachers post photos and video documentation of children's work and activities on this photo site. <http://teecc20192020.shutterfly.com>
- **Website:** there is a section dedicated to the ECC at www.templemanuelmd.org
- **Kol Kore:** the synagogue newsletter focuses on all aspects of the congregation.

Other Communication

- **Open Door Policy:** you may drop in any day, at any time, to join our activities. Please be mindful that during the day teachers must focus on the children so please do not use this visiting time for a conference.
- **Parent/Teacher 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:** an opportunity for parents to hear about the school's objectives, goals and processes and to meet other parents in your child's classroom.
- **Parent Learning Nights:** these meetings may feature a speaker or materials exploration or pedagogical overview. We welcome suggestions and encourage all parents to participate.

Contacting the ECC

- To reach the ECC during the day, call the main number (301) 942-2000. If your phone call is urgent and you cannot get through to the ECC, please speak with someone in the administrative office of the Temple and they will be glad to assist you.
- Please send an email to your child's teachers and to the Director 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, concern or feedback, you are encouraged to speak with the Director. If you require further assistance, you may contact the chairperson of the Community-Early Childhood Center Advisory Board, who serves as a representative on the Temple's Board of Directors. All financial matters should be addressed with the Temple's Executive Director.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is open year-round from 7:30am to 6:00pm. The ECC is licensed for children ages 2-5. A child must have had his/her second birthday in order to start at the ECC.

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 that 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. For your tuition is broken down into equal payments: 12 payments for 12 month students, 10 payments for 10 month students.

Enrollment Forms:

- 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
- MSDE "Guide to Regulated Child Care" for your records
- 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 ECC.

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

Our staff schedule and annual budget are based on the numbers of children we have at given times. There may be instances that we can extend a child from part day to full day schedule, but that is up to the discretion of the Director and based on staff ratio. If a change from 12 month to 10 month enrollment is made, 12 month tuition fees remain as per signed contract.

Early Childhood Center Calendar

The ECC will be closed for the following Jewish holidays:

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

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 begins at sundown.

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

The ECC will be closed 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

The ECC is also closed one day in the fall for Professional Development and one day in the winter for Parent/Teacher conferences.

The ECC is closed for winter break between Christmas Day and New Year's Day. A short mini-break is scheduled to coincide with Passover. The ECC is also closed for a week at the end of the 12 month program for teacher training and preparation for the upcoming school year.

Parents will be provided with a date-specific calendar at the beginning of the 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, such as Halloween and Valentine's Day, we encourage all of our children to share their stories about their family traditions and rituals with us.

ECC HOURS AND PICK-UP POLICIES

Arrival

The ECC opens at **7:30am**. Children can bring breakfast; there is a “breakfast table” set up in our opening room. It is important that children arrive by **9:00am** so that they can orient themselves each day and not miss key moments of classroom community-building and intentional learning. If your child will be late due to an appointment, please let us know.

Dismissal

The ECC closes promptly at **6:00pm**. (Pick-up for Part Day children is **3:00pm**). It is extremely important that you arrive on time to pick up your child, as late pick-ups can cause anxiety for the children involved. In addition, our staffing schedules and compliance of teacher/child ratios are dependent upon timely pick-up of your child. We are not licensed to care for children after 6:00pm.

We understand that emergencies and delays can happen; please call the ECC at (301) 942-2000 if you encounter any issues that will result in a late pickup.

Late Pick-Up Fee

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

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

Sign-in/Sign-out Policy

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulations require that you sign your child in 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 about our sign-in/sign-out policy. Minor siblings cannot sign children in or out.

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

The ECC 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 includes carpooling or any other temporary pick-up arrangements.

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

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Faculty and 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 have an Assistant Director, Pedagogista (Curriculum Specialist) and Atelierista (Studio Specialist) as part of our educational team.

Our float faculty members have the same 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 and are a third teacher in a class when one is needed. They are active participants and contributors to all that we do in our school.

We 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 position 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 staff meet the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) licensing requirements 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 faculty and staff are required to have a background and finger-print check and health form completed. Faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid trained. Several of our ECC employees 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 Assistant Director and/or the Pedagogista will be responsible for overseeing the school.

The Executive Director of the synagogue is responsible for all ECC billing and financial record keeping. You may contact her if you have questions about financial issues.

Guidance and Discipline

The ECC's 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.

Temple Emanuel ECC 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. 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 a 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 behavior persists, we will meet with the child’s parents to create 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 is always done in partnership with parents.

As part of the synagogue community, we believe in working with families during difficult times. We 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 our program’s appropriateness for the child.

When a child hurts another child, we 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 that we must apply first aid, we call the parents of both children. A written incident report is 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. 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 Infants 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 an important part of our school culture. The ECC birthday tradition is that each year, children create and present a gift to the birthday child based on the year’s intentional work with materials. The gift

represents the child and becomes a permanent part of the classroom for the school year. To celebrate the child, parents are invited to bring in a special snack (nut free) to share with the class and to donate a children's book to the classroom in honor of the birthday child. We encourage healthy birthday treats. Please do not send in "goody bags." Balloons are prohibited in the ECC.

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

Everything brought in from home should be labeled with child's name. Children can be very upset when a "favorite" item is lost. Toy weapons and items that are not age-appropriate are prohibited in the ECC. All items brought to school must be small enough to fit and be stored in your child's hallway cubby, bathroom cubby (for children in diapers), or backpack.

Items your child needs at school

- Nap/Rest items – blanket, pillow, cot sheet (crib sheets fit perfectly on cots), a "lovey." Nap/Rest items come to school on Mondays and are sent home for laundering on Fridays.
- Water Bottle
- Rain Boots/Snow Boots
- For children in diapers – diapers, wipes and cream if needed (must have a doctor note for cream)
- Sunscreen and Bug Repellent
- A few changes of clothes (please label)
- A framed family photo
- Allergy Medications if needed – Benadryl, Epi Pen, etc. (with doctor note)

Clothing

Children use materials such as paint and clay on a regular basis, they actively play outdoors in a variety of weather and they can have toilet accidents that require a change of clothes on occasion. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for children to get in and out of and something they would not feel badly about getting soiled.

A few changes of clothes should be kept in your child's cubby and replenished on a regular basis. Clothing should include underwear, shirts, pants and socks. If your child wears diapers or pull-ups, they will have an assigned drawer in the bathroom in which to keep an ample supply.

We take children outdoors in all types of weather. Please send your child to school in seasonally-appropriate jackets, raincoats, snow apparel such as hats and mittens, and boots. Shoes should be comfortable and safe for running, climbing and playing outdoors. Snow boots, rain boots and sturdy outdoor shoes can be kept at school – please label.

Flow of the Day

Though each class designs their own map of the day specific to their intentional work, the overall flow is as follows:

- Welcoming children
- Meeting – conversations about ongoing classwork, sharing experiences, open-ended dialogue
- Small group work – collaborative, intentional work in groups of 3-5 children
- Snack – two year olds have group snack all together; threes and fours have open snack, in which a snack table is set up and groups rotate through the snack offering if they are hungry
- Outdoor time/Garden work

- Reflection meeting
- Lunch
- Story
- Nap/Rest time
- Afternoon snack
- Choice time
- Outdoor time (we use the Kikar or Social Hall in inclement weather)
- Story

Outdoor Play and Learning

We view our outdoor space of Gan Emanuel 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 and rain puddles, and explore and discover the natural world around us. Please note this when planning your child's school wardrobe and sunscreen and bug repellent choices

Napping

Rest time is mandated by the State of Maryland for all preschool children. Therefore, all of our children rest after lunch, no matter their age. We monitor the patterns children develop during the first few months of the school year. Within the next few months, some older 3- and 4-year-olds give up an actual nap. This type of transition is a delicate stage in a young person's life. Children are growing rapidly; their bodies need rest/don't need rest and it is a cycle of sleeping/no-sleeping. We think of ways to provide an adequate balance between nap and rest while staying in compliance with state-mandated policies. We are always evaluating children's nap patterns and our staffing patterns in order to support children's needs.

In our Pre-K classes, we offer "menuchah" (*Hebrew, (a place of) rest*). Children still meet the first half of the mandated nap time with books on tape/chapter books/soft music and in the second half of the mandated nap time they are met with quiet activities, such as board games, puzzles and drawing. Older children that still do need a nap are always given the opportunity to sleep.

Field Trips

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

School Photographs

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

Throughout the year teachers take photos of ECC activities. We post these candid photos on our documentation boards and our Shutterfly and Facebook account. Occasionally, Temple Emanuel will use these photos in our newsletter and promotional literature. Parents are required to complete a photo permission release form as part of your child's enrollment paperwork.

Ta'am Shel Shabbat (A Taste of Shabbat)

The ECC celebrates *Ta'am Shel Shabbat* every Friday morning. It is a special day in our week. We celebrate and remember this day of rest and reflection 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 Rabbi Mark, a teacher, or guests. We then return to classrooms for blessings over the candles and a special Shabbat snack of challah and grape juice. We 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, Eloheinu 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, Eloheinu Melech Ha'Olam Hamotzi lechem min haaretz
Blessed are You God, Who bring 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. The Temple Emanuel website lists 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

Most two-year-olds are not toilet trained and toilet training is not a requirement at Temple Emanuel ECC. 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 successes and keep a positive, upbeat attitude when the child has an “accident.” The parent and ECC 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 the teachers updated on progress at home, as well.

Parents need to provide diapers and wipes for their child. If your child uses diapers or pull-ups, they will have a designated drawer in the bathroom for these supplies. The staff will let you know when you will need to replenish your child’s diaper supplies.

FOOD POLICY

Please alert us to any food allergies.

The ECC follows the *Kashrut* policy of Temple Emanuel. **No pork or shellfish products are permitted.**

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

- **The entire downstairs ECC wing is 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.
- Please see the Appendix for the Temple Emanuel Nut Policy.

Breakfast

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

Lunch

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

We ask that you do not pack candy in your child’s lunch or send it in to share with others.

Snacks

Nutritious snacks are provided in the morning and afternoon. Our snack menu is based on recommendations of a registered dietician who specializes in the health of young children. We serve organic milk and items such as low-fat cheese, whole-wheat crackers, fresh fruit and vegetables, hummus, rice cakes, sugar-free apple butter, whole grain cereal and plain, low-fat yogurt. Children participate in preparing snack and we often use fresh produce they harvest from our outdoor gardens and indoor Tower Garden.

On Friday mornings, 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 supply individual snack boxes for children who have severe food allergies or intolerances.

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, and as required by MSDE, 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, 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.

Illness Guidelines

- **Fever:** A child with a fever should stay home 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 irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes and sneezing. A cold may or may not include a fever. Children are often most contagious in the early, runny nose 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** – Your child may return with a doctor's note that states child is no longer contagious.
- **Head Lice:** The ECC 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.

Notifying School

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, we will inform staff and parents.

Medication

Maryland licensing regulations stipulate 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 the ECC 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 Director'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 backpack.

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

For security reasons, we ask that only adults 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 only use the handicap buttons if you need them. We talk to children about the purpose of the handicap access and appreciate that you reinforce this.

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 ECC level. These are the doors adjacent to the parking lot, at the end of the hallway and indoor play area. The ECC gathering place is on the side of the building at Dresden Avenue.

In the event the ECC 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 and fire-drills are 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 emergency bag. This bag 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 ECC. Handicapped parking spots are available only to vehicles with a state-issued permit. 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 do not park right in front of the entrance doors. This area needs to be kept clear for emergencies.

Snow Policy

There may be winter weather 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 closing is determined by a number of factors:

- If the Federal Government is closed due to inclement weather conditions, the ECC will be closed.
- The ECC 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 the ECC may also be based on safety conditions of the areas surrounding Temple Emanuel. If road conditions are hazardous, we will close the ECC. A decision will be made by 6:30am and parents will be informed 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 9:00am. 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 weather conditions will continue to deteriorate.

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

APPENDIX: 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 ECC 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
Ginkgo 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