Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR PARENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME
- GENERAL STATEMENT 2

MISSION AND GOALS 3

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
- HOURS OF OPERATION 4
- LATE PICKUP FEES 4
- TRANSITION POLICIES 4
- CURRICULUM 4
- FORMS 7
- COMMUNICATION 7
- FIELD TRIPS 8
- SUPERVISION 8
- STAFF 8
- CONFERENCES 9
- DISCIPLINE 9
- BIRTHDAY PARTIES 9
- PETS 10
- TRANSPORTATION 10
- PARKING 10
- SHABBAT & HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS 10

TUITION
- PAYMENT 11
- FINANCIAL AID 11
- GEORGIA GOALS 11

LICENSURES AND ACCREDITATIONS 12

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
- JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES 12
- ADDITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT 12

HEALTH AND SAFETY
- GENERAL HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 13
- IMMUNIZATIONS 13
- LICE 15
- MEDICATION 16
- SUDDEN UNEXPECTED INFANT DEATH 16
- HANDWASHING 16
- DIAPER CHANGING 17
- TOILET TRAINING 17
- BITING 18

FOOD 20

CLOSINGS 21
- SCHEDULED CLOSINGS 21
- WEATHER & EMERGENCY CLOSURES 22

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT 22

DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, & SPONSORHIP 23

POSTED NOTICES 24

SECURITY 24

ADDITIONAL POLICIES
- IMPROVEMENT & EVALUATIONS 24
- MANDATED REPORTER 24
- SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME 25
- CUSTODY DISPUTES 25
- SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION 25
- GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE 27
- CONFIDENTIATLITY 27

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!

Dear MJCCA Preschool Families,

Welcome to the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta Preschools. It is our commitment to provide your child with a wonderful, enriching and nurturing early childhood school and camp experience for children from 6 weeks through Transitional Kindergarten\Kindergarten.

We always welcome your feedback and look forward to our growing relationship with you.

Warmly,

Kim, Stephanie, & Nancy

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MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

The mission of MJCCA Early Childhood Services is to offer an exemplary preschool program that nurtures children's unique strengths, fosters exploration, and develops their positive Jewish identities. Our innovative curriculum is challenging and integrates a strong Judaic content. All learning takes place in a warm and developmentally appropriate setting facilitated by highly qualified teachers who work closely with each child and their family. Children complete our program prepared to excel in any future educational setting.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

HOURS OF OPERATION

All programs run Monday-Friday, 10 months a year with June and July being an optional summer “camp” program.

Our Full Day Program runs from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Our Half Day (Core Day) Program runs from 9:30am –1:30 pm

Late Pick-Up Fees: Should a child be left beyond his/her preschool's operating hours, a late pick-up fee of $2.00 per minute will be charged. If this becomes habitual, the fee will be increased, and families will be asked to go on a monthly payment plan to collect these fees so that we do not need to utilize office staff time in the collection process.

TRANSITION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

At the beginning of each school year, there is a parent orientation where you will have an opportunity to meet with the teaching staff. There is also a specific time for children to visit the classrooms and/or individual arrangements are made for the children and families to spend time in the classrooms and school.

Parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring. These conferences provide an opportunity for discussion regarding your child’s progress through our benchmarks for growth and development.

Staff-child interactions are key in a child’s development. We foster children’s emotional well-being by demonstrating respect for each child. Teachers create a positive emotional environment reflected by frequent social conversations, joint laughter, and affection. We help children express emotions appropriately and respond to children based on individual needs.

Teachers talk frequently with children and listen to children with attention and respect, responding to questions and requests, building relationships with each child, engaging regularly in meaningful and extended conversations with each child. Our infant teachers provide frequent face-to-face interactions both verbally and non-verbally with the babies.

CURRICULUM

Our play-based curriculum is supported by our commitment to each child’s individual growth and development both Judaically and generally. Children are involved in rapid and dramatic growth and development in the first years of life. Although there are

differences in individual development, the sequence of developmental stages remains the same. Expertise in child development enables the teacher to view each child individually and plan appropriate instruction in a sequential manner. When children progress at their individual pace, they can experience success and grow one step at a time. The introduction of new skills and behaviors is always based on the child's state of readiness, not his or her chronological age. Presentation of any new task is contingent on the successful completion of all prerequisite tasks.

The Marcus JCC of Atlanta preschool curriculum encourages children to be actively involved in the learning process. Balancing child-initiated/teacher-initiated, active/quiet, and indoor/outdoor activities, the curriculum aims to prepare children for life's experiences by helping them to develop social relations through peer interaction; fostering a positive self-image and a sense of personal achievement; encouraging opportunities for independence and success; encouraging creative expression and appreciation for the arts; and promoting sound health, safety, and nutritional practices.

To promote each child's Jewish identity and sense of Jewish values, the program offers experiential activities in Jewish customs and rituals and a warm Jewish environment. Students are encouraged to develop respect for cultural diversity within and outside of Judaism and are provided opportunities for language and literacy in both English and Hebrew.

The secular curriculum is based on standards set in four traditional areas of child development that together comprise the foundation for a total learning environment. These four traditional areas are: Cognition, Literacy, Movement, and Social Relations. The standards are established as a continuum of skills and behaviors that children should achieve as they progress from one year to the next; however, the standards are flexible, recognizing that every child develops at an individual rate.

The Judaic Curriculum is based on standards set in eight areas of Jewish learning that together comprise the foundation to enable our "graduates" to leave with basics in Judaics as well as an awareness and pride in their own identities as little Jewish people. The eight Judaic areas are: Values, Holidays, Shabbat, Jewish Text, God, Hebrew, Israel, and Ritual.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FULL DAY PROGRAM:

- Children may be enrolled in the program at 6 weeks of age to five years old.
- Children will be placed in age-appropriate groups as determined by the school director.
- The age cut off for class placement is September 1.
- Mixed groupings for classes are sometimes necessary due to enrollment. In the event of mixed groupings, there will be no more than a one-year age range between the oldest and youngest children in the group. Combination groupings between full day and half day are also sometimes necessary. In these situations,

there may be some children in your child's room who leave at 1:30. Careful attention is paid to ensure that children be grouped with friends, that combinations as such are created with a balance of half and full day children, and that we are attentive to mixing genders.

- It may also be necessary to combine ages during our early care and aftercare sessions. During this time, we continue to maintain safety protocols and ratios.
- The full day program is loosely structured as follows:
    - Early arrival and free play
    - Morning Circle
    - Snack
    - Daily special (may include art, music, Judaics, PE, science, etc.)
    - Classroom projects, centers, activities
    - Playground
    - Lunch
    - Free play
    - Rest
    - Snack
    - Free play until picked up
- We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time for any reason.

General Information for Half Day Programs:

- Children may be enrolled in the program at age one year to five years of age by September 1.
- Children will be placed in age-appropriate groups as determined by the school director.
- Combination groupings between full day and half day are also sometimes necessary. Be assured that your child will not be missing any new information in the afternoons, as the instructional time when new information is shared takes place during the core hours of 9:30-1:30.
- Careful attention is paid to ensure that children be grouped with friends, that combinations as such are created with a balance of half and full day children, and that we are attentive to mixing genders.
- The half day program is loosely structured as follows:
    - Arrival
    - Morning Circle
    - Snack
    - Daily special (may include art, music, Judaics, PE, science, etc.)
    - Classroom projects, centers, activities
    - Playground
    - Lunch
    - Play time
    - Dismissal
- We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time for any reason.

Camp Programs

- Camps are run at each of our locations:
  1. Camp Marie Benator at Zaban Park
  2. Camp Billi Marcus at Temple Kol Emeth
  3. Camp Schiff at Temple Emanu-El
- The Summer Camp activities include modified versions of the school year curriculum along with additional summer programs such as swimming with the MJCCA Zaban Park Aquatics staff (at the Weinstein location only) and/or water play, outdoor activities, nature walks and more!
- As with the school year, mixed-age groupings are sometimes necessary. Some camp sessions have a higher enrollment than others. We make the greatest effort possible to ensure consistency of groups of teachers and children from week to week; however, there is the possibility that groups may change over the course of the sessions.
- MJCCA Preschool Camp staff is comprised of adults, college students and teenagers. All swim instructors are CPR certified and trained by the aquatic staff.
- We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time for any reason.

SCHOOL FORMS:

Keeping our children's files current is critical both for the safety of the children and according to state regulations. The following forms must be completed by Full Day and Half Day families, EACH YEAR – for new camp families and all families prior to the beginning of school.

1. Current Georgia Certificate on Immunization #3231 (obtained at child's doctor's office and submitted within 14 days of enrolling)
2. MJCCA Carpool and Parking Information Guidelines
3. MJCCA Payment Arrangement Form
4. Safe Sleep Practices Agreement (infants only)
5. *If applicable - Court Documentation of divorce agreement that outlines custody and visitation
6. *If applicable – Allergy Form, Seizure Plan, Asthma Plan with picture of child
7. Any changes in personal information, health information or release of information must be submitted in writing to the office.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

MJCCA Preschools are committed to reducing paper use and to using the internet as much as possible for a communication tool with parents. Therefore, most of our communications will be provided electronically. Families are responsible for providing the school with current email addresses and for following procedures for getting information. Families are expected to check for information regularly. School and camp communication varies by location, so it is important to read the initial director email at the start of each new session. Each director electronically sends Friday letters home. Each classroom teacher will share weekly classroom information electronically as well.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

The pre-k children may participate in limited field trips. On those trips, the number of adults increases to ensure more supervision. The ratio becomes 1:5 rather than 1:10.

SUPERVISON POLICY

The MJCCA preschools require that teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible. Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers by sight and sound at all times. When infants and toddlers are sleeping, monitors and mirrors may not be relied on in place of direct visual and auditory supervision. Preschoolers may be supervised for short intervals by sound as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight. (i.e., a child using the toilet independently).

SWIMMING SUPERVISION (Weinstein Only)

When students are swimming, state swimming ratios are strictly followed in the pool area. In addition, at least one person supervising the children must have current evidence of having successfully completed a training program in lifeguarding offered by a water-safety instructor certified by the American Red Cross or YMCA or YWCA or other recognized standard-setting agency for water safety instruction.

In water deeper than 2 feet:

Ages of Children	Staff:Child Ratio
Two and one-half (2 1/2) to four (4) yrs.	1:5
Four (4) yrs. and older who cannot swim a distance of fifteen (15) yards unassisted	1:6
Four (4) yrs. and older who can swim a distance of fifteen (15) yards unassisted	1:15

In water less than 2 feet deep:

Ages of Children	Teacher:Student Ratio
Two (2) year olds	1:10
Three (3) year olds	1:15
Four (4) year olds	1:18
Five (5) year olds	1:20
Six (6) years and older	1:25

MJCCA PRESCHOOL STAFF

All Early Childhood Services and Programs are overseen by Jared Powers. Each school is headed by a director or head of school, who is responsible for overall operation of the program. If warranted, an associate director and/or assistant director may share in the administration of the school. Depending upon the school location there may be

additional office staff who share in the administration of the program as well. The MJCCA Preschool teaching staff is comprised of nurturing and caring individuals who have met education and training requirements for the position held. All staff are CPR/First Aid Certified and are required to participate in continuing education programs and in-service training sessions through our Benator Early Childhood Training Institute. A minimum of 18 approved training hours are required for each staff member yearly. Ten of these hours must be state approved, the remaining hours are determined jointly between the staff member and their supervisor.

CONFERENCES
Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered twice a year to families. Additionally, teachers and families are encouraged to communicate whenever they feel a child's experience warrants discussion.

DISCIPLINE
MJCCA Preschool Staff believe in consistent, understandable limits and respond to inappropriate behavior with insight, sensitivity, and skill. Staff establish predictable limits to help children understand the consequences of their actions. Teachers act as role models and give ample praise for appropriate behavior. Positive techniques of guidance including redirection, anticipation and elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement and encouragement are used rather than competition, comparison, or criticism. Time out is only used as a last resort. Staff work to prevent behavior problems by arranging the classrooms so that children can work in small groups and have a choice of activities.

Teachers use a pleasant voice level and move to the children rather than shout across the room. Teachers do not scream or use sarcasm. Disciplinary actions used to correct a child's behavior and guidance techniques are never detrimental to the physical or mental health of each child. Food or special activities are never withheld as a punishment.

The administrators are always available for advice and guidance, but teachers first must try to handle problems in the room. When there are recurring discipline issues the director and teacher may request a meeting with the parents to work together on a plan to ensure student success. Teaching staff assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them to identify their feelings and use their words to describe problems and help find alternative solutions.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES
The MJCCA Early Childhood Services kindly requests that no birthday parties be held on Shabbat (Friday evenings or Saturday) or on Jewish holidays in keeping with Jewish traditions so that no child is precluded from attending due to his/her family's religious beliefs or observance.

For birthdays being celebrated at camp or school, please note the following:

- Families should discuss dates and times with their child's teacher or camp counselors.
- **All schools are peanut and nut free**

- Each school has its own rules and restrictions regarding Kashrut (Kosher food). Please check with your school's director to ensure you are following their protocols
- **Balloons are considered choking hazards and are not permitted.**
- Party favors are also not permitted. In lieu of party favors, many families opt to donate a book, puzzle or toy to give to the classroom, so that the birthday child has the honor of giving, not just receiving, on his/her special day. Families who wish to donate an item to the classroom should discuss special needs or wishes with the classroom teacher.
- If a birthday is to be celebrated away from school or camp and the entire class is invited, the school/camp will be happy to distribute invitations, or families may place them in the children's cubbies. If the entire class is not invited, we ask that the invitations be mailed.

PETS

Pets and visiting animals are allowed on a limited basis. All classroom pets or visiting animals must appear to be in good health and must have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter that the animals are fully immunized (if applicable). In addition, we must have prior written permission from the parents of the children in the classroom that the pet will be visiting. Reptiles are NOT allowed as classroom pets (because of the risk of salmonella). Teaching staff carefully supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Staff ensures that children allergic to an animal are not exposed to that animal.

TRANSPORTATION

- Transportation to and from school/camp is the responsibility of the families.
- All children in our programs must be escorted to and from the classroom by their families or by an adult authorized by the families such as a teacher or facilitator.
- Full day children must be signed in and out daily using our PikMyKid App
- All children must be in a car-seat or booster seat
- There is NO cell phone use permitted in the carpool line
- We ask that you turn off your car while children are being loaded and unloaded
- Staff are not permitted to buckle children into car seats
- Georgia law requires that all children must be fastened before leaving the carpool line.

PARKING

Each school facility has its own parking and carpool guidelines for the safety of all our children and members. **Please obtain this information from your school and be sure that you or anyone transporting your child adheres to these procedures**.

SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Children at the MJCCA preschools are fortunate to experience our special Shabbat Sing programs. Through song and dance, children, teachers, staff, and community members share in the excitement of welcoming Shabbat. The school also celebrates holidays

(Jewish and Secular) through special classroom and school wide programs and activities.

The Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta preschools **do not celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day or St. Patrick's Day because of their religious origins. Halloween costumes and Valentine's Day cards are not appropriate.**

TUITION

PAYMENT

- The MJCCA ECS Finance Committee annually sets tuition for all MJCCA Preschool Programs.
- FOR SCHOOL: First payment is taken in June
- FOR CAMP: First payment is taken in April
- Tuition is payable by EFT or credit card
- There is a $30 charge for each check and credit card decline.
- Cash or money orders will be accepted as a replacement form of payment. Two returned checks or credit card declines will result in the account being placed in a “Cash Only” status.
- a 3 % fee will be added for credit card fees
- No refunds are given for inclement weather days, sick days or vacation days unless otherwise stated.
- If a child is absent for four consecutive weeks because of illness (confirmed in writing by the child's physician), a refund of one-quarter of the month's tuition will be applied to the following month's tuition.

FINANCIAL AID

The Marcus JCC is proud to be able to offer financial assistance to families who may require it. The scholarship process ensures anonymity. FACTS is the outside company that calculates financial assistance for our families. Forms and information for applying may be obtained from the school Director but be assured that all applications go directly to FACTS.

- Families applying for financial assistance should submit a confidential scholarship package as soon as possible to the preschool office.
- A non-refundable $25 registration fee must accompany each application.
- Applications will be processed and reviewed with confidentiality.

GEORGIA GOALS

MJCCA Preschools encourage participation in Georgia Goal Scholarship Program. Through the Georgia Goal Program, you can support Jewish education in Georgia at virtually no cost to you through a dollar-for-dollar Georgia income tax credit received for your contribution. For any child attending an MJCCA PreK, TK, or Kindergarten program, additional scholarship may be available through The Georgia Goals

Scholarship Program. The application process is the same as the financial aid application process and can be done online. To learn more about Georgia Goals, please visit their website at www.goalsscholarship.org .

LICENSURES AND ACCREDITATIONS

MJCCA Preschools adhere to the regulations of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and follow the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The Schools are licensed by the State of Georgia through Bright from the Start (BFTS) and DECAL.

All three schools strictly adhere to NAEYC ratios, and we reserve the right to adjust the ratios in accordance with guidelines as children get older during the year. Our teacher to student ratios are as follows:

1. Infants and Ones: 1:4
2. Twos: 1:6
3. Threes 1:9
4. Fours 1:10

All three schools are Accredited with Quality from The Georgia Accrediting Commission. In addition, The Weinstein School and Sunshine School is also accredited by NAEYC. In accordance with MJCCA Preschool policies,The Schiff School also follows NAEYC guidelines.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Jewish Family & Career Services, Inc. and Early Childhood Services have been involved in a joint program since 1983 to provide services to the preschool programs. A social worker is available to children and their families through referral, either by the school director or teacher, or by families' request. All requests must be made through the school director. On-site consultation is provided free of charge to families being served by the Early Childhood Services school programs. Services provided by the social worker include consultation, crisis intervention, assessment, counseling, information, and referral. JFCS provides social workers upon request to work with families and help screen children who show signs of developmental delays or emotional and behavioral difficulties.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Our ultimate goal is the success of every child in each classroom. The MJCCA Preschools recognize that all children develop differently and have different learning needs. We are committed to individualizing instruction to maximize each child's success.

There are occasions where individual children present with issues beyond the scope of what we can accommodate in a larger group setting. When an individual child's unique needs begin to impact their own ability to progress, we discuss this with the family and may ask that evaluations and or additional supports be explored. We recognize as families work to get evaluations to determine how to best assist their child that it sometimes takes time. During the time in which parents are getting evaluations and establishing assorted needed therapies for their child, the school reserves the right to require that parents provide additional support for their child in the classroom. This will be done at their expense to ensure that evaluation process happens in a timely manner and that during this time their child is still able to participate appropriately and benefit from the learning that is taking place. It also ensures that there is minimal impact to the other students and classroom as a whole while this process occurs.

The MJCCA must report any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children Services.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

MJCCA PRESCHOOLS reserve the right to modify any policy to reflect changes in protocols as determined by the CDC, BFTS, or MJCCA.

We understand the importance of childcare to our families. While we cannot anticipate an interruption in service, it may be necessary for the school to close due to recommendations by the health department and/or CDC due to wide-spread illness. **We are doing our part** through increased cleaning and sanitization. **Please do your part** by keeping your children home if they are sick.

Please note, no refunds will be given for tuition during an individual quarantine or temporary class or school closure.

GENERAL HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- **IMMUNIZATION POLICY:**
  For each child enrolled, the parent (or legal guardian) must provide within 14 days of enrollment, a current immunization record (3231) appropriate for the child's age. **Only medical exemptions approved by the MJCCA will be allowed. It is the responsibility of the parent (or legal guardian) to update the file when the health records change or expire.**
- Families are requested to sign an authorization giving the school administrators and/or staff permission to act In Loco Parentis for emergency treatment. It is Early Childhood Services' policy to contact the parents first. If the parents cannot

be reached, the school will attempt to reach the emergency contact person listed on the emergency-medical authorization before staff assumes responsibility for medical care, other than First Aid.

- 911 will be used in emergencies. Children will be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency medical care.
- For minor injuries (little boo-boos), staff will notify parents and complete an accident form to give to parents by the end of the day.
- For the protection of all children in any of the Early Childhood Services programs, children should not be sent to school when they are ill or exhibiting the symptoms of any illness. Children should be kept at home, or will be sent home, if they develop any of the signs or symptoms of a contagious or other disease.
- Parents will be notified by email when children have been exposed to a communicable disease. Please inform the center if your child becomes ill with any communicable disease. Depending on the circumstances, the MJCCA may be required to report any suspected case of notifiable communicable disease to the local county health department.
- Families should consider keeping their children home, under observation, if they exhibit any of the following:
  · unusual behavior
  · child is more cranky than usual
  · less active than usual
  · child cries more than usual
  · child feels general discomfort or just seems unwell
  · loss of appetite
- When a child becomes ill at school, a sick-child report will be filled out by the teacher and must be signed by a member of the family or authorized adult before leaving school.
- For the health and safety of the children and staff, the MJCCA preschools have a smoke-free environment.
- Any questions on these health policies will be decided by our Medical Committee.
- The MJCCA reserves the right to send any child home if at least two (2) members of the Pre-school Staff, in their sole discretion, believe that the child may pose a risk to him/herself, other children, and/or MJCCA staff.

Reasons for removal from the Pre-school due to illness include, but are not limited to, the following diseases and other contagions:

- **Gastrointestinal Illnesses**
  Vomiting and /or Diarrhea
  Bacterial Gastroenteritis
  Giardia (a parasite)
  Hepatitis A
- **Meningitis**
- **Respiratory Illnesses**
  Mumps
  Croup
  Influenza
  Pertussis (whooping cough)
  Tuberculosis (TB)

Chicken Pox

- **Fever** 100.00 Fahrenheit or higher axillary. Children must be fever free without fever suppressants for a full school day before returning to school.
- **Diarrhea:** Two or more abnormally loose stools per day. Children must be diarrhea-free for a full school day before returning to school OR present a physician's note stating cause of diarrhea and that the child is not contagious. If a child develops diarrhea at school, s/he will be sent home as diarrhea diseases spread very easily among young children.
- **Vomit:** When a child vomits, the staff will assess the situation and try to determine if it was the result of something the child recently ate versus the symptom of a bug. Parents will always be called. If the child acts uncomfortable or has behavior that is atypical after the first vomit OR if the child vomits a second time, parents will be required to take them home. Children must not have vomited for a full school day before returning to school.
- **Upper Respiratory**
  Severe Coughing - Child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after s/he coughs.
  Ear infections with fever - mucus/discharge from ears and/or nose with fever
- **Difficult or Rapid Breathing** This is especially important in an infant under six months of age.
- **Yellowish skin or eyes, gray or white stool and/or unusually dark, tea colored urine**
- **Pinkeye / Conjunctivitis** Tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation followed by swelling and discharge of pus
- **Unusual Spots or Rashes** Children must be free of rashes and spots for twenty-four hours before returning to school OR present a physician's note stating that the child is not contagious.
- **Sore throat or trouble swallowing**
- **Infected patches of skin and fever (crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin)**
- **LICE:** Lice are commonplace among children in preschool and elementary school. If your child contracts lice or nits (their eggs) you should:
  - Notify the school
  - Shampoo your child's hair with one of the available lice removal shampoos (Nix and Rid are very good), or seek the help of a professional lice removal service (a list is kept in the office)
  - Check other members of the family for lice and shampoo if needed
  - Wash your family's clothing and sheets in very hot water
  - Check your child's hair again and REMOVE ALL NITS.
  - Our school policy requires that any child returning to class must be ENTIRELY FREE OF NITS even if her/his hair has been shampooed. Children not meeting this condition will be sent home.

Children will be admitted to school only when the above signs or symptoms disappear or a health care provider states in writing that the child is no longer contagious and can safely return.

***General health and safety protocols are subject to change**

Medication

- NO medications are permitted to be transported or stored in backpacks. Both prescription and over the counter medications must be passed directly between parent and staff.
- Medication will be administered to children only with daily signed authorization and corresponding forms completely filled out.
- All medications must be in the original container with the child's name.
- ALL medications are stored in the director or nurse's office and administered by staff at assigned times.
- Expiration dates of medication must be current. The staff will administer no more than the dosage of medication printed on the label.
- Over the counter medication will be administered with the same parental authorization, as long as a standing order from a licensed health professional is provided with details on the specific circumstances and provides instruction on dosage.
- Any noticeable adverse reaction to the medication will be recorded and immediately communicated to the family.
- Medicine may not be left beyond its course.
- Bright from the Start does not permit Tylenol, Motrin, OTC cold medicines to be left on hand "in case".
- Sunscreen with UVB or UVA protection and SPF of 15 or higher must be provided with parental permission or sun protective clothing must be worn when in the sun.
- When public health authorities recommend the use of bug repellant, only those containing DEET may be provided, labeled and given to the office staff with written permission.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death

To reduce the risk of SUID/SIDS, infants are required to be put down on their backs for sleep. Pillows, quilts, comforters, and blankets are not permitted in cribs. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

Handwashing policies

Handwashing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children. Children and adults wash their hands upon arrival for the day, after diapering, or using the toilet, after handling body fluids, before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, or after handling any raw food that requires cooking. (Food service gloves must be worn when serving food), after water play that is shared by two or more people, after handling pets and other animals or material such as sand, dirt or surfaces that might be contaminated by animals, and when moving from one group to another that involves infants and toddlers. Adults also wash their hands before and after feeding a child,

before and after giving medication, after assisting a child with toileting and after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper handwashing includes using liquid soap and running water, rubbing hands vigorously for 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists between fingers, under fingernails, under and around jewelry, rinsing well and drying with a single use paper towel and avoiding touching the faucet with just washed hands.

Diaper Changing Policy
The diaper changing areas shall be sanitized after each use. Proper diaper changing procedures shall be followed as outlined:

- Staff use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use (the health provider documents the medical reason).
- For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents that escape of any accidents. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- IF the parent gives permission, soiled underwear will be discarded.
- Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or dirty at least every two hours when children are awake and when children awaken from naps.
- Diapers are changed immediately when wet or soiled.
- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- Each changing area is located at least three feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children.
- At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.

Toilet Training Policy
We work with the families and children individually on toilet training when a child indicates readiness and a family has begun this at home for a few days. A child must give some indication that he/she knows what is about to happen. If not, the child is not ready and should not be pushed. If the child is really ready, he/she must wear underpants all day. Pull-ups can be confusing for children and may be used for naptime only. Children should wear clothing that they are able to pull down and up themselves.

Staff will encourage the children to use the potty as often as possible. Don't worry about accidents, they are going to happen. Some children toilet train in a day, some children take much longer. Each child is an individual. During this time, please send in some extra sets of clothing to have on hand. If the staff is noticing that a child is having more

failures than successes, they will advise the parents to take a break from potty training and to try again at a later time. Any questions on these health policies will be decided by our Medical Committee.

Biting Policy

While biting occurs as part of the natural progression of a child's development, it is a topic that tends to provoke strong feelings in the parents of both the injured child and the child who bites, regardless of the severity of the bite. At MJCCA preschools, we know that biting often occurs as a natural progression of a child's development. Intermittent biting in the toddler years may be the result of any number of reasons and does not necessarily indicate a serious problem. Some of these reasons may include such things as teething, a lack of language, frustration, or attention seeking. We understand that while biting is developmentally age-appropriate, it is also not socially acceptable. Like other areas of behavior and discipline, we bring up the topic of biting together as a class on an ongoing basis. We strive to provide children with the tools to express their feelings, provide a classroom environment with enough toys to deter issues, and a lower than state mandated ratio to assure excellent supervision.

We therefore have a biting policy which is designed to promote a positive and safe environment for all children and their families.

When an incident of biting occurs, the following steps are followed:

For the biter:

1. The child is immediately removed from the area where the incident occurred without providing any unnecessary feedback or conversation that might reward attention seeking behavior
2. A teacher then speaks with the child using age-appropriate tone and words conveying the idea that "Biting hurts" and "We treat our friends with kindness."
3. The child is redirected to another area
4. An incident report is written up and the parents are called. The name of the child bitten is kept confidential.

For the child who was bitten:

1. The child is separated from the biter.
2. First aid and TLC are administered as needed.
3. An incident report is written up and the parents are called. The name of the child who bit is kept confidential.

Should biting become more frequent than intermittent, we believe that by creating a partnership with the parents, resolutions are reached as a team with everyone's best

interest in mind. This partnership may include implementing any of the following protocols:

1. Documenting each time a bite occurs to look for patterns in behavior and ways to predict and prevent future bites
2. Teaching children to defend themselves against biting by using their words
3. An examination of the classroom environment
4. The director and teachers meet with the parents to develop a partnership wherein the needs of both the child and the classroom are taken into consideration. Together, they will create a written action plan which may include any one of the following actions:
    a. Enlisting the assistance of a shadow in an attempt to predict and prevent biting from occurring. This shadow might result in an additional cost to the family.
    b. Making arrangements for the child to be released from school should a second bite occur within the same school day
    c. Recommendation of an OT and/or speech and language evaluation to further investigate other underlying causes of the biting
    d. When all best practices have been explored and the issue is still not remediated, agreeing upon a time frame during which the child will remain at home thereby providing time for the child to mature out of the behavior.

FOOD

At snack and at meals, teaching staff sit and eat with the children and engage them in conversation. Teachers encourage independence when eating and help facilitate the proper use of eating utensils. Additionally,

- All MJCCA preschools are **PEANUT AND NUT FREE**.
- Each school has its own dietary restrictions surrounding the serving of Kosher food.
- At the Weinstein School, all food served by the school complies with the rules of the Atlanta Kashrut Commission. At the Weinstein School, Full Day children are provided two snacks and a kosher lunch each day. The Half Day children are provided one snack each day and bring their own lunch. In addition, any food, snacks, etc. brought by families for sharing in their child's class must be checked in at the office for proper kosher labeling.

- At the Sunshine and Schiff Schools, as well as children in the half day program at Weinstein, all children bring their own lunch but are provided snack each day. Lunches brought from home are not mandated by kosher dietary requirements; however, we do ask that you respect the spirit of the laws of kashrut and follow these guidelines of not sending milk and meat products together in the same meal and refraining from sending in pork or shellfish.
- We offer the children water or milk daily and grape juice on Friday for Shabbat.
- **Children are not permitted to share any food brought from home. This ensures children's dietary observances and the prevention of allergic reactions.**
- Families MUST notify their child's teacher or camp counselor, as well as the office, of any food allergies**. An allergy action plan must be posted in the child's classroom.**
- We strictly adhere to the following food protocols regarding choking hazards as determined by Bright from the Start. Staff does not serve children younger than four the following foods:
    - Hotdogs-whole or sliced into rounds
    - Whole grapes
    - Raw peas
    - Hard pretzels
    - Carrot chunks
    - Meat in sizes larger than can be swallowed whole
    - Popcorn
    - Marshmallows
- Food in the infant room must be cut into bite size pieces that children can easily manipulate and swallow. Additionally, due to unknown allergies and our choking prevention protocol, the following foods are strictly prohibited in our infant program:
    - Eggs
    - Fish
    - Honey

Thank you for helping us to maintain the integrity of our school's food policy.
The staff reserves the right to prohibit a child from eating any food that the child appears not to consume safely.

CLOSINGS

SCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS:
Please consult your school's calendar for dates and additional information. If occurring on a weekday, The MJCCA Schools are closed on the following days:

- Labor Day
- Rosh Hashanah (two days)
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot (two days)
- Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah (two days)
- Thanksgiving (Monday through Friday)
- Winter Vacation
- MLK Day
- Presidents Day
- Passover week (including the day of the first Seder)
- Memorial Day
- Shavuot (one-two days)
- Independence Day
- Floating Staff Training/Conference Day
- Camp Preparation (2-3 days in May)
- School Preparation (5 days in August)

PRESCHOOL VACATION CAMPS (PVC): *
During Winter Break and Passover Break, the Weinstein Dunwoody campus offers "Preschool Vacation Camp" (PVC). These camps are offered at an additional cost and are open to all preschool families. Space is limited and a separate registration is required. PVC is offered on the following days:

- Winter Vacation – End of December and beginning of January (check calendar for schedule)
- Passover – The intermediate days (check calendar for schedule)

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSINGS AND OTHER CONTINGENCIES
For information on school/camp closings, delayed openings and program cancellations, families should tune into WSB-TV. Additionally, information will be shared on social media platforms and through each school's communication methods such as Facebook, ClassDojo, and direct and/or calling Email Alerts.

In the event of severe weather during school/camp hours, children will proceed to the most inner hallway away from windows and doors. Each school will follow their branch's severe weather policy. This policy is posted at the main school/camp entrance as well as in each classroom.

In the event of a fire or any other dangers, the children will be evacuated immediately to a safe distance away from the building. Fire evacuation routes are posted in the main school/camp entrance as well as in each classroom.
In case of any emergencies, please call the school office or main number for a message.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Research teaches us that children are most successful when parents and school are partners. Helping children see consistency from the earliest of ages between home and school improves behavior and builds positive self-esteem. We encourage you to:

- **Sign up to volunteer in your child's classroom.** This can be to be a mystery reader, cook for a holiday party, assist with a class display, or anything that interests. We are very flexible with scheduling volunteer time to ensure everyone participates.
- **Invite a special person to attend Shabbat Sing, VIP Day and other special school programs.**
- **Join the Parents' Group.** Each school has an active Parents' Group which offers the opportunity for parental involvement in order to advance the educational aims of the school. Membership is open to any parent/guardian who has a child in any MJCCA Preschool program. A children's activity fee may be requested. The Parents' Group has a five-fold purpose:
    1. To offer social and cultural enrichment programs for the children
    2. To offer programming to the parents/families
    3. To raise funds for additional equipment and supplies, social and cultural events/performance for the children, and educational enrichment to help meet the needs of the school
    4. To support the administrators/teachers in their professional roles
    5. To provide the opportunities for ongoing communications between administrators, teachers, and parents.
- **Become a Room Parent:** Room parents will serve as liaisons between the teachers, the Parents' Group, and the classroom parents. Room parents for each classroom will be selected at the beginning of each school year. It is suggested that each Parents' Group have on its board a Room Parent chair that will serve as liaison between the Parents' Group, the administration, and all room parents. A room parent might be asked to:
    1. Coordinate helpers for special activities
    2. Create phone tree for communication among families
    3. Support parents group activities
    4. Coordinate celebration/support for life cycle events for families
    5. Welcome new families to the classroom
- **Join the MJCCA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE:** The MJCCA Early Childhood Services Committee (ECS) is one of several program committees of the Board of Directors of the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta. As with all MJCCA committees, the President appoints the chair of this committee. Its purpose is to advise and recommend policy for MJCCA preschools in coordination with the Head of Schools and School Directors. The MJCCA ECS Committee is composed of families and other lay people as well as

administrative staff. The primary responsibilities of the MJCCA ECS Committee are:

1. To make recommendations concerning the type and quality of programs offered by the MJCCA Preschools department
2. To conduct needs assessments of the preschool age group and their families in order to plan new programs
3. To evaluate the various programs for which the committee is responsible
4. To make recommendations on the budget for specific MJCCA Preschools programs
5. To suggest ways and means of financing and executing needed facility improvements
6. To advise on the hiring of individuals for management and newly created positions
7. To oversee policies and procedures of Parents' Group
8. To be responsive to the needs of MJCCA Preschool administrators and staff
9. To be responsive to the needs of families with children in any Early Childhood Services program
10. To represent the MJCCA ECS to the community.

DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING and SPONSORSHIPS

As we continue to grow, we are becoming very attractive to companies that want to market their goods & services. As the third largest JCC in the nation with 19,000 members, we are an active, diverse organization. Three million people per year come through our gates---thousands and thousands more access our website at www.atlantajcc.org. Since our membership tends to represent a consumer category that is highly sought after, The J is an excellent avenue for sponsorships and advertising. Please contact our Director of Development, Janel Margaretta janel.margaretta@atlantajcc.org or our Director of Marketing, Keely Sime keely.sime@atlantajcc.org for specific information on how your company can take advantage of this excellent direct marketing opportunity. This is the only means to advertise or reach our members. We cannot accept any individual or company attempting to market or sell their goods or services to our members via directories, lists, rosters, etc. Any such direct contact is a violation and the parties in question will be pursued. We thank you for adhering to this important policy, and we encourage you to contact our marketing department for development, marketing, and sponsorship opportunities.

POSTED NOTICES

The following are notices that are posted in the school/camp hallway:

- Childcare License
- Copy of the Bright from the Start Rules and Regulations
- Notice advising parents of their right to review our most recent Evaluation Report (Bright from the Start)
- Communicable Disease Chart
- Statement of Families Access
- Names of persons responsible for the administration of the preschool
- Current Weekly Menu for Full Day Program
- Emergency Plans for Severe Weather and Fire (posted in office and classrooms)
- Statement requiring visitors to check in
- No Smoking Signs

SECURITY

The MJCCA believes that the safety and security of its members is of the utmost importance. We hold fire drills on a monthly basis, tornado drills twice a year, and active shooter drills twice a year. We also practice evacuation procedures. In the event of an emergency, the message on the office phone will be changed, as soon as possible, to inform parents of the situation. The three locations have on-site, armed security guards during operating hours and locked door system with only identified persons allowed to enter. In the interest of safety for all our children, families, and staff, no firearms are permitted on the property or in the facilities.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND ANNUAL PROGRAM EVALUATIONS
Our preschools establish goals for continuous improvement and innovation using information from annual program evaluations. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies. The findings of the annual evaluation are shared with families, staff and appropriate advisory and governance boards and the results are used as a basis for continuing successful activities and changing those that need improvement.

Mandated Reporter Policy
As per state childcare licensing regulations, the director or designated person in charge must report or cause to be reported any of the following:

- child abuse
- child neglect
- child deprivation

In accordance with state law, suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect or deprivation

will be reported to the local County Department of Family and Children Services.

Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) & Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) Prevention Policy
MJCCA Preschools is committed to protecting children from shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma. All staff are trained on the information below at hire and annually.

Recognizing & Reporting:
Staff are trained to recognize symptoms such as unusual irritability, difficulty breathing, vomiting, seizures, limpness, or unexplained bruising. Any concerns are reported immediately to the Director and to Child Protective Services, as all staff are mandated reporters. Emergency services (911) will be called if symptoms are severe.

Responding:
If SBS/AHT is suspected, staff ensure the child's safety, seek medical help if needed, notify administration, document observations, and follow mandated reporting requirements.

Caring for Crying or Distressed Children:
Staff use developmentally appropriate soothing techniques such as rocking, comforting words, checking basic needs, offering a calm space, or asking another staff member for support. Staff may briefly step back to regulate themselves as long as supervision ratios are maintained.

Understanding Brain Development:
Training includes typical infant and toddler behavior, crying patterns, and the vulnerability of young children's developing brains to stress or injury.

Prohibited Behaviors:
The following are strictly prohibited: shaking or rough handling; physical punishment; yelling or threatening language; handling a child in anger; or any action that could cause harm or restrict breathing.

Mandated Reporting
All staff members are mandated reporters. If we suspect a child has been shaken or harmed, or if we see unexplained injuries or concerning symptoms, we are legally required to report this to child protective services. Reporting is a protective measure; it does not mean a family is being accused.

Family Partnership
Caring for young children can be challenging. If you need support or guidance on managing crying or frustration, please reach out. We are here to partner with you in keeping every child safe and healthy.

Policy for Custody Disputes
Children can only be released to parents, who have signed the Enrollment Form, and adults listed on the Release Authorization form. In the event of a custody dispute, we must rely on legal documentation and information provided by the enrolling parent.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy
At MJCCA Preschools, we are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for every child. We believe that challenging behaviors are a form of communication and that young children learn best when surrounded by skilled educators, supportive families, and consistent routines. Suspension and expulsion are used only as a *last resort* and only after all appropriate supports have been carefully considered and attempted.

Our Approach

We strive to partner with families and provide individualized support so each child can be successful. Our goal is to prevent suspensions and expulsions by:

- Building strong, trusting relationships with children and families
- Using positive behavior-support strategies
- Providing additional staffing, classroom adjustments, or behavior plans when needed
- Seeking guidance from our Inclusion & Support Team and other specialists

Communication With Families

If a child is experiencing ongoing behavioral challenges, families will be informed early and often. Teachers and administrators will:

- Share observations and concerns in a timely and respectful manner
- Collaboratively create a plan that may include classroom accommodations, targeted strategies, or referrals for outside support
- Hold follow-up meetings as needed to review progress and update plans

Short-Term Suspension

A short-term suspension may be considered only when a child's behavior poses a **serious and immediate safety concern** to themselves, other children, or staff. Examples may include repeated aggressive behavior that cannot be safely managed in the moment.

Suspension will be:

- Used only after other de-escalation strategies have been attempted
- As brief as possible
- Communicated clearly with the family, including the specific reason and steps for returning to school
- Accompanied by a written support plan developed with the family

Expulsion

Expulsion from MJCCA Preschools will be considered **only when all available resources and interventions have been exhausted** and when maintaining enrollment is no longer safe or appropriate for the child or school community.

Before considering expulsion, the school will:

- Document all supports and interventions attempted
- Engage in multiple problem-solving meetings with families
- Explore possible schedule changes, classroom transitions, or additional services
- Assist families with referrals to community resources and, if needed, help identify a more suitable program

Families will receive written notice of any expulsion decision, along with documentation of the steps taken to support the child.

Immediate Dismissal

In extremely rare cases, a child may be immediately dismissed if a situation presents an **unmanageable and immediate danger** that cannot be mitigated through reasonable accommodations or support.

Non-Discrimination

MJCCA Preschools does not suspend or expel children on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, family structure, or any other protected category.

Family Partnership

We recognize that families are essential partners in supporting children's growth. Our goal is always to work together to help every child thrive. We encourage families to communicate openly with us and to reach out whenever they have questions or concerns.

Grievance Procedure

We recognize that in every organization situations arise where individuals have concerns or grievances. We believe that the easiest way to resolve these situations is through open and candid discussion with the people involved. If you have a concern in your child's classroom, it would be best to first discuss this with the classroom teacher. If such discussion does not resolve your concerns, you should speak to the director or assistant director of the school. If you are not satisfied with the response from the school director, you may refer the matter to Kim Sucan, director of all MJCCA Preschools or to the MJCCA Executive Director, Jared Powers. Communication is an open-door policy. Staff encourage families to email, call, write or talk to program staff members in person. Space is made available for private conversations.

Confidentiality

- **Statement of intent:** It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents while ensuring that they access high quality care and education in our setting.
- **Aim:** We aim to ensure that all parents can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.
- **Methods:** Parents have access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff orientation includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person. We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:
    1. **Developmental records** which include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement. These are kept in portfolios by the teachers in the classroom and can be accessed and contributed to by staff and the child's parents.
    2. **Personal records** which include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters. These confidential records are stored in a lockable file or cabinet and are kept secure by the person in charge in an office.

MJCCA Preschools is honored to be part of your child's early learning journey and look forward to partnering with your family to nurture curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning. Thank you for trusting us with your child's early years; we're excited to learn and grow together!