



Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL
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WELCOME

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

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GENERAL STATEMENT

This manual summarizes general policies and procedures of the Marcus Jewish Community Center Preschools. If there are any questions, please contact us for clarification. The school and camp programs administered by the Preschools serve children from six weeks through five years of age.

MISSION

The MJCCA Early Childhood Services offers 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.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The MJCCA 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. We have two focuses in our curriculum, the secular learning benchmarks and Judaic benchmarks.

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.

The Summer Camp activities include modified versions of the above along with swimming with the MJCCA Aquatics staff and water play, outdoor activities and nature walks.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Underlying our curriculum is a commitment to the child’s 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 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.

LICENSURES AND ACCREDITATIONS

MJCCA Preschools adheres to the regulations of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and follows the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The Schools are licensed by the State of Georgia through Bright from the Start; Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. The Weinstein School and Sunshine School programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We strictly adhere to NAEYC ratios and we reserve the right to adjust the ratios in accordance with NAEYC guidelines as children get older during the year. In addition, The Weinstein School is also accredited by SACS and The Sunshine School has earned a 3 Star Quality Rating.

HOURS

The Weinstein School and The Schiff School

Full-Day Program runs from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm

Half-Day Program runs from 9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Transitional Kindergarten runs from 7:00 am – 3:00 pm

The Sunshine School

Program runs 9:30 am-1:30 pm with the flexibility for families to sign up for early morning, early afternoon and late afternoon

The program runs Monday-Friday 10 months a year with an optional two-month summer program.

General Information:

1. Full-Day Program



- a. Children may be enrolled in the program at 6 weeks of age (Weinstein and Schiff only) to five years old.
- b. Children will be placed in age appropriate groups as determined by the preschool director. The age cut off is September 1.
- c. Mixed grouping are sometimes necessary due to enrollment. In the event of mixed grouping there will be no more than a one-year age range between the oldest and youngest children in the group.
- d. 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 pm. Careful attention is paid to ensure that children are 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.
- e. We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time for any reason.

2. Half-Day Program

- a. Children may be enrolled in the program at age one year to five years of age by September 1.
- b. Children will be placed in age appropriate groups as determined by the preschool director.
- c. Combination groupings between full-day and half-day children are also sometimes necessary in the threes and fours. 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 am -1:30 pm. Careful attention is paid to ensure that children are 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.

3. Camp Program

- a. Camps are run at each of our locations:
 - i. Camp Marie Benator at Zaban Park
 - ii. Camp Billi Marcus at Temple Kol Emeth
 - iii. Camp Schiff at Temple Emanu-El
- b. Combination groupings between full-day and half-day children are also sometimes necessary in the threes and fours. 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 am -1:30 pm. Careful attention is paid to ensure that children are 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.
- c. In half-day camp, some sessions have a higher enrollment than others. We make the greatest effort possible to ensure consistency however there is the possibility that groups may change over the course of the sessions.
- d. We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time for any reason.

School Forms:

1. 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.
 - a. Current Georgia Certificate on Immunization #3231 (obtained at child's doctor's office) (within 14 days of enrolling)
 - b. MJCCA Carpool and Parking Information Guidelines
 - c. MJCCA Payment Arrangement Form
 - d. *If applicable - Court Documentation of divorce agreement that outlines custody and visitation
 - e. *If applicable – Allergy Form with picture of child



2. Any changes in personal information, health information or release information must be submitted in writing to the office.

Immunization Policy:

For each child enrolled, the parent (or legal guardian) must provide a current immunization record (3231) appropriate for the child's age prior to the first day of the program. **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.**

Tuition:

1. The MJCCA ECS Finance Committee annually sets tuition for all MJCCA Preschool Programs.
2. FOR SCHOOL: First payment is taken in June
3. FOR CAMP: First payment is taken in April
4. Tuition is payable by EFT or credit card
5. 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.
6. a 2½% fee will be added for credit card fees
7. No refunds are given for inclement weather days, sick days or vacation days unless otherwise stated.

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.

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

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

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

FIELD TRIP POLICY (Weinstein Only)

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



SUPERVISION POLICY

MJCCA Preschools requires 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).

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 directors 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. The directors and staff are required to participate in continuing education programs and in-service training sessions through our Benator Early Childhood Training Institute. A minimum of 18-22 approved training hours are required for each staff member yearly. Ten of these hours must be state approved, the remaining eight to twelve are determined jointly between the staff member and their supervisor.

MJCCA Preschool Camp staff is comprised of adults, college students and teenagers. All swim instructors are CPR certified and trained by the aquatic staff.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered twice a year to families. Families of children attending the Summer Camp program will receive a written report on their child's progress at the end of camp. 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 to be most effective. 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.

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 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

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.

THE ADAPTIVE LEARNING CENTER

The MJCCA has a Partnership with The Adaptive Learning Center and Jewish Family and Career Services. The Adaptive Learning Center is a program that provides therapy and education for infants and young children with, or at risk for developmental disabilities. Children with special needs are included in our preschool classrooms with their typical peers. ALC staff members provide extra help to students in need and offer training and support to teachers. ALC also performs on-site assessments for typical students who show signs of a developmental delay.

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 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 an additional support for their child in the classroom. This will be done at their expense (\$12-\$15/hour) 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.

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.

MJCCA Preschools do not celebrate Halloween, Valentine's Day or St. Patrick's Day because of their religious origins. Halloween costumes and Valentine's Day cards are not appropriate.

HEALTH

A medical form and CURRENT immunization form #3231 from your child's physician's office, including hepatitis B, signed by the child's physician and a medical emergency information form must be in the school's files before the child can be admitted each year.(within 14 days) We require updated forms upon expiration.

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 they will be sent home, if they develop any of the signs or symptoms of a contagious or other disease. 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 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
Pertusis (whooping cough)
Tuberculosis (TB)
Chicken Pox

Further, if a child behaves unusually, appears to be uncomfortable, or is inconsolable for an extended period of time, the parents may be requested to retrieve their child.

Bringing a child with any sign or symptom of illness to school may cause other children to get sick. If all families keep sick children at home, everybody's children will stay healthier. Children must be kept home until the following signs or symptoms disappear. Please notify the school of any illnesses especially contagious communicable diseases so we may notify staff and families.

Fever

100 degrees 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 have not 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)

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.

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.

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.

For your convenience, medications will be administered to children only with daily signed authorization. All medications must be in the original container with the child's name on it and prescription number and given to the office. 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 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 repellent, only those containing DEET may be provided, labeled and given to the office staff with written permission.

The MJCCA is required to report any suspected case of notifiable communicable disease to the local county health department.



When 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.

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.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

To reduce the risk of 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 on 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 for Classrooms/Playground

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 (a) at least every two hours when children are awake and (b) when children awoken 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.
- Staff post and follow changing procedures.

Toilet Training Policy

We work with the families and children individually on toilet training when a child indicates readiness. 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 or pull ups. Children should wear clothing that they are able to pull down and up themselves.

Toilet training should begin at home first for a couple of days. At the very beginning at school, staff will take the children to the potty every 15 minutes. After several days to a week (depending on the child), children will be taken every ½ hour and staff will keep asking them if they need to use the potty. 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. Any questions on these health policies will be decided by our Medical Committee.

FOOD

MJCCA policy assures that all food served by the MJCCA complies with the rules of the Atlanta Kashrut Commission. As a Jewish institution, we adhere to the Jewish dietary laws and serve only kosher food at all on-site programs. Therefore, all snacks and meals provided by MJCCA programs are strictly kosher. 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. At the Sunshine and Schiff School, all children bring their own lunch but are provided snack each day. 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.

Lunches brought from home are not mandated by kosher dietary requirements, however we do ask that you refrain from blatant disregard for the laws of kashrut. Please no meat and cheese sandwiches, shellfish, pork products, etc. **Children are not permitted to share any food brought from home. This assures children's dietary observances and the prevention of allergic reactions. For the health and safety of all of our children, the Marcus JCC Preschools are nut-free.** We offer the children water or milk with the exception of serving grape juice on Friday for Shabbat. Milk and/or water are served at meals and snacks. Children under the age of four may not be served hot dogs, whole grapes, popcorn, raw peas and hard pretzels, raw carrot chunks or meat that cannot be swallowed whole.

Families MUST notify their child's teacher or camp counselor, as well as the office, of any food allergies.

MEALTIME PROTOCOL

At snack and at meals, teaching staff sits and eats with the children and engages them in conversation. Meals are served family style and the teachers help the children in serving themselves and cleanup. The



meals are prepared by an outside caterer and are sent to each of the schools by courier. The teachers are responsible for putting out the food.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthdays may be celebrated at school. Families should discuss a date and time with their child's teacher or camp counselors. Only strictly kosher food may be brought for your child's celebration. Please check with the school office before purchasing and upon arrival to the school. **NO FOOD MAY BE PREPARED AT HOME.** For baking on the premises, the kitchen must be reserved and all Atlanta Kashrut commission policies must be observed. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING NON-KOSHER TREATS AS THEY CANNOT BE SERVED.** **No Balloons please.** Party favors are 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.

The MJCCA ECS Committee recommends that no birthday parties be held on Shabbat (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.

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 the animal should be protected). 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 Full Day programs must be escorted to and from the classroom by their families or by an adult authorized by the families.

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.

All children must be in a car-seat or booster seat and have their seatbelts fastened before they leave the carpool line, as required by Georgia law.

HOLIDAY/SCHOOL AND CAMP CLOSINGS

1. The Schools are closed on the following days (if occurring on a weekday):



- Labor Day
- Rosh Hashanah (two days)
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot (two days)
- Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah (two days)
- Thanksgiving (Early Release Wednesday through Friday)
- Winter Vacation
- MLK Day
- Presidents Day
- Passover week (including the day of the first Seder)
- Memorial Day
- Shavuot (two days)
- Independence Day
- Camp Preparation (3 days in May at Weinstein and Schiff, 2 days in May at Sunshine)
- School Preparation (5 days in August)

Please consult the calendar for dates and additional information.

2. The schools offer Preschool Vacation Camp at the Dunwoody Campus, at an additional cost, for the following days that the school is closed: Please note that a separate registration is needed.

- Winter Vacation – End of December and beginning of January (check calendar for schedule)
- MLK Day
- Presidents Day
- Passover – The intermediate days (check calendar for schedule)
- Camp Preparation (2 or 3 days in May)
- School Preparation (5 days in August)

3. The Holiday schedule for the Preschool Vacation Camp program is as follows:

- December 24 - close at 3:00 pm
- New Year's Eve - close at 3:00 pm

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSINGS AND OTHER CONTINGENCIES

For information on school/camp closings, delayed openings and program cancellations, families should tune into WSB-TV Channel 2 or WXIA-TV-11 Alive or hear it on the radio at WSB-Radio 750AM, B98.5FM, KISS 104.11FM, FOX 97, 95.5 /The BEAT, STAR 94/94.1 FM. Weather closings will also be communicated through Calling Post and 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.

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.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents are permitted to have access to all areas of the center whenever their children are present.

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 helps their behavior and builds positive self-esteem for children to see their parents and teachers working together. To that end, it is our expectation that families who enroll in our program will commit to the following:

1) Sign up to come twice a year 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 you that brings you to the school. We are very flexible with scheduling volunteer time to ensure everyone participates.

2) Invite a special person to attend VIP day for your child.

The date for VIP day is on our calendar annually and we ask that you get a grandparent or someone special to join for a morning of extending our classroom to our children's special people.

3) 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. The Parents' Group has a five-fold purpose:

- To offer social and cultural enrichment programs for the children To offer programming to the parents/families
- 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
- To support the administrators/teachers in their professional roles
- To provide the opportunities for ongoing communications between administrators, teachers and parents.

Membership is open to any parent/guardian who has a child in any MJCCA Preschool program. A children's activity fee may be requested.

TRANSITION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

At the beginning of each school year, there is a parent orientation and parents have an opportunity to meet with the teaching staff. There is 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. At parent teacher conferences there is opportunity for discussion about the next year (November and April). Parents are encouraged to visit and observe other classrooms.

Staff-child interactions are key in a child's development. Teaching staff 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. Teaching staff help children express emotions appropriately. Teachers respond to children based on individual needs Teaching staff 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. Infant teachers give one to one attention to infants when engaging in routines and interact frequently face to face (both verbal and nonverbal).

OTHER WAYS TO BE INVOLVED

ROOM PARENTS

Room parents will serve as liaisons between the teachers, the Parents' Group, and the classroom parents. Their functions include such duties as:

- To coordinate helpers for special activities
- To creating phone tree for communication among families
- To support parents group activities
- To coordinate celebration/support for life cycle events for families
- To welcome new families to the classroom
- Room coordinators 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 Coordinator chair that will serve as liaison between the Parents' Group, the administration, and all room coordinators.

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:

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

MARKETING

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 JCC is an excellent avenue for sponsorships and advertising.



Please contact our Marketing Department 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 dept. for marketing and sales 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 and 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 locked door systems and only identified persons are allowed to enter. In the interest of safety for all our children, families and staff, no fire arms are permitted on the property or in the facilities.

Mandated Reporter Policy

As per state child care licensing regulations, the director or designated person in charge must report or cause to be reported any of the following: child abuse, neglect or deprivation. Suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect or deprivation will be reported to the local County Department of Family and Children Services in accordance with state law.

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.

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, please speak to Howie Rosenberg. If your concern has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you may refer the matter to the 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 POLICY

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

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

1. Developmental records

- These include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement.
- They are kept in a portfolios by the teachers in the classroom and can be accessed, and contributed to by staff and the child's parents.

2. Personal records

- These 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.
- 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.

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.**

These MJCCA Preschool policies and procedures were last revised May 2019. Should any changes to this document need to be updated; the MJCCA Preschools will inform the families and staff of the changes **