

Downtown Jewish Preschool

Parent Handbook



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A NOTE FROM US

Welcome to our Preschool!

Thank you for choosing Downtown Jewish Preschool for your child.

At DJP we are proud to offer a creative, progressive, Jewish environment where your child's individual style of learning will be valued and nurtured.

Our aim is to encourage enthusiasm and responsibility for learning and to foster each child's natural creativity and curiosity as we model kindness, respect, compassion and confidence.

Thank you for giving us the chance to teach your children. We are humbled by this responsibility and your faith, entrusting us with the monumental partnership in your child's education.

We look forward to an amazing year together of growth, learning and fun.

Please take some time to review the Parent's Handbook so that we can be partners in creating the best, safest and most enjoyable experience at Downtown Jewish Preschool. Please don't hesitate to call or email with any questions.

We are here to serve you to the best of our ability.

Welcome to the family!

Sincerely,

Rabbi Schneur and Devorah Kaplan

OUR GOALS AND VALUES

- ✓ To nourish your child's heart and mind as we develop cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills.
- ✓ To encourage self-confidence and individuality by helping young children to enhance their learning and socializing abilities.
- ✓ To foster enthusiasm and responsibility for learning and to encourage each child's natural creativity and curiosity.
- ✓ To provide a curriculum geared to the different and developing interests of each child.
- ✓ To provide a setting rich in materials and resources, a caring and highly qualified staff, a developmentally-appropriate program, and activities that are both teacher-guided and child-initiated.
- ✓ To provide rich and meaningful Jewish content, including education about Jewish holidays, music, traditions and the Hebrew alphabet and language.
- ✓ To communicate to parents the philosophy, goals and program of the Downtown Jewish Preschool and to provide opportunities for parent involvement and education.
- ✓ To enrich school experiences by using community resources and outside professionals in the field of early childhood education.
- ✓ To nurture an environment of Jewish culture rich in our traditions, customs and holidays.
- ✓ To instill Jewish pride and love for Israel.
- ✓ Our overarching commitment includes 1. Being a Jewish School 2. The safety and well-being of your child 3. Age-appropriate development and skills 4. A Reggio inspired approach 5. Conscious Discipline and Mindful-ish Social Emotional Behavior.

Downtown Jewish Preschool

Where Nature & Nurture Harmonize



Judaism :

Rooted in Tradition, Growing with Joy

At our Jewish school, Judaism is the guiding thread that weaves through every aspect of our community and values. We proudly embrace our Jewish identity, celebrating and exploring the richness of Jewish holidays throughout the year. Each day, children recite blessings over their food and lift their voices in joyful prayer during circle time. We end each week with a special Shabbat celebration, complete with music, stories, and the delightful experience of baking challah together. Our mission is to instill in every child a deep pride in their Jewish heritage and a meaningful, lasting connection to Israel.



Safety :

Safety First, Always

At DJP, the safety and well-being of our children, staff, and families is our top priority. Our campus features an armed guard, secure perimeter, and reinforced doors and windows. All staff are trained in emergency procedures, CPR, and first aid. We also uphold clear health and wellness standards, ensuring every child arrives ready to thrive. Together, our school community creates a safe, nurturing space where everyone is supported and protected.



Development :

Supporting Every Child's Unique Journey

At DJP, our curriculum nurtures age-appropriate developments and skills across all areas of early childhood, including social-emotional growth, fine and gross motor skills, literacy, math, science, and the arts. Our teachers receive ongoing training to support each child's milestones, and families stay connected with regular progress updates throughout the year.



Reggio :

Nurturing Creativity and Confidence Through the Reggio Emilia Approach

Our school embraces the Reggio Emilia philosophy, an innovative approach to early childhood education from Italy. At its heart, this philosophy sees each child as a confident learner with endless potential. We celebrate the "100 languages of children," honor the environment as a vital "third teacher," and follow an emergent curriculum that grows from the children's own interests. With a focus on autonomy and creativity, our nurturing environment encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning.



Mindfulish :

Nurturing Hearts, Growing Minds

A strong social-emotional foundation is key to early childhood success. Our SEB Director, Fran Rubio Katz, brings over 25 years of experience, guiding staff and children through the Mindfulish® approach—a blend of loving boundaries, mindful teaching, and brain-based tools. Through her expertise, we create a nurturing environment where children and families thrive.



OUR PHILOSOPHY

"Play" is not the opposite of "work" - both are part of everyone's life. For young children, there is no division between "play" and "work"; they are learning through everything they do.

At DJP, our classrooms are set up as an environment of learning. The centers that make up the design of the rooms change according to the current unit, so that the children are learning as they play. This also provides them the opportunity to explore the various centers as it arouses their curiosity, promoting independence and important self-help skills. DJP believes in an experiential and intentional approach to teaching and learning. This approach fosters children's intellectual development, as they are encouraged to explore their environment and express themselves through words, movement, drawing, painting, playing and other natural modes of expression. We promote an environment where children can develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills for a successful and meaningful life.

All the dedicated, caring staff at the Downtown Jewish Preschool want to be certain that your child has the very best early childhood experience possible. Our Jewish values drive the curriculum, environment and school culture. We model and encourage kindness, respect, compassion, confidence and responsibility. Judaism teaches that the formative years of early childhood are vitally important. A child is viewed as a seed that we nurture with the utmost care, since the seed's every experience will shape and color the quality of its matured self.

Judaism underscores the uniqueness of every child with the axiom "Chanoch L'naar Al Pi Darko," teaching us to learn with children according to their individual paths. We recognize that each child has his or her unique needs, interests and passions. Our children are viewed as collaborators: they are competent, curious, inquisitive, unique, and creative.

WHO WE ARE AND HOW TO REACH US

Downtown Jewish Preschool is a project of the
Downtown Jewish Center Chabad.

DJP 1 is located at:

The Steen Family Jewish Education and Event Center
1012 E Broward Blvd. Fort Lauderdale Florida 33301

DJP 2 is located on our property at:

910 E Broward Blvd. Fort Lauderdale Florida 33301

Contact information:

Our phone number: 954.667.8000

E-mail: info@downtownjewish.com

Website: www.downtownjewish.com or ganreggio.com

Director:

Devorah Kaplan

E-mail: Devora@downtownjewish.com

Direct number 754.234.5770

HOURS OF OPERATION

DJP is for boys and girls aged 18 months through 4 years old.

Full day program:

Monday - Thursday from 9:00am - 3:00pm

Fridays from 9:00am - 2:30pm

Half day program:

Monday – Friday from 9:00am -12:30pm

We offer early-care and after-care ONLY with sufficient parent interest.

Late policy:

A consistent and timely schedule is of paramount importance for all children.
Children arriving after 9:15am must contact the office for permission to drop off late.
No child will be allowed to arrive on campus after 10:00am.

TUITION POLICIES

Registration:

The registration fee is a non-refundable processing fee.

Withdrawal Policy:

In the event of early withdrawal, you are responsible for a pro-rated amount of the tuition through the end of the month of withdrawal, plus 30% of the annual tuition, not to exceed the total tuition amount for the year.

Enrollment reserves a child's space in the program. Tuition is due in full regardless of absences, illnesses, holidays, behavioral modifications, or schedule adjustments initiated by the school or parents. If a child's attendance or schedule is temporarily modified due to behavioral or safety concerns, tuition remains payable in full during that period.

The registration fees are non-refundable. You may be eligible for a refund of pro-rated, pre-paid tuition (less the registration fee) if your contract is terminated. Your contract may be terminated if the Director chooses to dismiss a child based on procedures/reasons outlined in this Handbook, or for non-payment of tuition.

A workable form of payment, such as a viable credit card, must be on file at DJP to charge the monthly tuition and to be used in case of early withdrawal or any miscellaneous charges.

EXPULSION or SUSPENSION POLICY

Reasons for expulsion or Suspension may be but are not limited to:

- If we find a child is a danger to himself or to others.
- If we cannot adequately support or provide for his or her needs (as determined in the discretion of the administration).
- If a parent is abusive or disruptive to children, staff or the program (as determined in the discretion of the administration).
- If payments are not made in a timely manner.
- If all paperwork is not submitted.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Inclement Weather:

Please note that if Broward County Schools are closed for inclement weather or any other emergency, we will also be closed. We will not make up for days closed due to the above.

Holidays:

DJP will be closed for the Jewish and secular holidays and vacation. See calendar.

SNACKS AND LUNCH

Downtown Jewish Preschool provides snack as part of the tuition cost. Snack may include fruit, vegetables and carbohydrates such as pretzels, crackers or cheerios. **Children with allergies or food preferences such as gluten-free, egg-free, nut or seed free, dairy-free and the like, must provide their own snack.** While DJP does not and cannot guarantee that any child's environment will be free from substances, foods, or allergens that may trigger a child's allergies, sensitivities, or other medical conditions, each class will be assessed by the enrolled students' needs, and we will attempt to accommodate for potential allergens.

DJP offers you the opportunity to purchase our daily lunch program. The lunch program includes lunch and afternoon snack. A well-balanced, healthy, kid-friendly lunch is provided with changing menus. Details on the cost and menus are provided in your package for your consideration. **Children with food allergies, sensitivities, or preferences cannot be part of the lunch program and must provide their own lunch.** On occasion your child may not prefer what we have on our lunch menu, which is completely natural as we all have different tastes and preferences. On the days that your child does not like the school lunch you are welcome to send a lunch to school. See below for home lunch requirements.

If you do not participate in the DJP lunch program, a Kosher dairy or pareve (no meat) lunch and afternoon snack should be sent with your child to school every day. We cannot heat or cool food items, so please be sure to send lunch in temperature controlled, insulated containers such as a thermos. As we strive to provide a healthy example, please send your child with a well-balanced, nutritious lunch. **Please do not send candy or juice boxes to school.** All lunchboxes and containers should be clearly marked with child's name. If sippy cups are brought to school, cups must be marked with child's name and date brought. Food brought from home will not be shared with other children out of respect for the individual kosher and dietary restrictions of each child.

A clearly labeled water bottle must be sent daily with your child. Please ensure the bottle is full upon arrival at school. Children are encouraged to drink from their water throughout the day. We will refill their water bottles as needed.

Lunch is a yearly commitment charged to your card in equal parts for 10 months of the year with the first payment of 10 starting on April 15th and the subsequent 9 payments from July 15th through March 15th.

If at any point during the school year you wish to cancel your child's enrollment in the lunch program, the following will be applied: You are responsible to pay the full amount of the current months lunch fee, regardless of the day of the month that you cancel. Canceling will also incur a one-time administrative fee of \$100.

CLOTHING

We have a DJP school uniform shirt. You may purchase the shirt from our office for an additional fee. The school uniform shirt should be worn every day. Fridays is an optional day for uniform. Children can wear the school shirt or a 'Shabbat' outfit on Fridays. Pants, shorts, and skirts can be any style, fabric, or color including denim.

Please bear in mind that the children will be playing outside and with a variety of materials and mediums throughout the day. Children tend to get messy and dirty. Although teachers try to ensure the children wear smocks, sometimes their creativity carries them away. Any soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. Please make sure your child has a complete set of labeled clothing at the school in case of an "accident." Please check periodically to see that the clothing fits your child and is appropriate for the weather.

Children should wear sturdy, well-soled shoes that will always be practical and comfortable for them to wear during the day whether they are in the playground, sandbox, or in the classroom. Tennis shoes are the recommended footwear for their comfort and safety. Please send along appropriate jackets or sweaters when the weather gets cooler so that the children will be comfortable while playing outdoors.

BIRTHDAY PARTY GUIDELINES

Birthdays are such an important day, and we would love to celebrate with you at DJP.

We have put together these guidelines for celebrating a birthday in our class:

- Please notify your child's teacher at least two weeks in advance to schedule your child's class party and ensure that we put it on the calendar.
- The recommended contribution towards the party is either \$25 paid to DJP or a gift for the class in honor of your child.
- Birthday parties are celebrated ONLY on Fridays at our Shabbat party.
- We request that you do NOT bring ANYTHING for the party ☺ The children will do everything from baking the cake to decorating a hat and more!
- Do not send party bags or any birthday items.
- Parents are welcome to join the birthday party for children in the older classes – This must be coordinated with your child's teacher.
- If parents attend the party, they must take their child home after the party.

Parents not attending the party may join on zoom or WhatsApp video.

Please coordinate with your child's teachers.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

School begins at 9:00am sharp and ends at 3:00pm sharp.

- Parents may park on the street or in the school parking lot.
- You may also park at our properties 900 & 912 E Broward Blvd.
- Our security guard is here to keep us safe, so please heed his instructions carefully.
- **Teachers are NOT available for conversation during drop-off and pick-up.**
- No child will be released to a person not authorized in writing by a Parent/Guardian to pick them up. Please be aware, we will check Photo ID before releasing your child to someone unknown to us. They will also need to share your **password**.
- At DJP we appreciate the benefits of a parent walking the child to and from school.
- **How to drop-off:**
 - 1. Park.**
 - 2. Bring your child to the front gate**
 - 3. Share a morning greeting with the welcoming staff**
 - 4. Do your goodbye routine with your child**
 - 5. Your child will be signed in**

➤ **Classroom doors lock at 9:15am.**

You must have permission from the director to drop-off after 9:15am with a valid excuse such as, but not limited to a Dr.'s appointment.

No child will be admitted to school after 10:00am.

➤ **How to pick up:**

1. Park.

2. You will retrieve your child from the front door.

3. The teacher will sign out your child.

4. At 3:05 sharp all children still in school will be brought to after-care.

After-care:

Monday-Thursday 3:05pm – 5:00pm / \$15 per part of any hour

Pickup anytime between 3:06pm and 4:05pm is \$15 per child;

Pickup anytime between 4:05pm and 5:00pm is \$30 per child.

Your card will automatically be charged at the end of each month for After-care.

**PLEASE RESPECT YOUR CHILDREN AND BE PRESENT WHEN DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP.
CELLPHONE USE IS NOT ALLOWED. Please, finish your call before drop-off or pick-up**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Fire/Disaster Drills:

During the school year, we conduct fire and disaster drills teaching students our safety procedures in a non-frightening manner. During fire drills, the children will practice evacuating to a safe location away from the building. During disaster drills the children will practice evacuating to the innermost hallways away from windows and doors. During lock down the children will be ushered into the bathrooms or protected under tables and chairs while the teachers barricade the doors.

Vaccinations and Immunizations:

Broward County requires that all Health and Immunization records be completed and presented to the school prior to opening day for your child to be admitted to class.

Without current Health and Immunization forms, a child is not allowed in school. It is your responsibility to know the expiration date and update your forms with the office.

Toilet Training:

Children in the 2-year-old class do not need to be toilet trained. We do not toilet train children at school. Children are considered toilet trained and may transition to underwear (no pullups) at school when all the following occur: 1. Child is fully toilet trained for at least one week at home without accidents. 2. The child can verbally communicate their need to use the restroom with words that are clear and appropriate. 3. The child can independently dress and undress themselves. If your child has 3 or more accidents, we will need to re-evaluate their toilet training readiness and they may need to remain in diapers.

Minor Injuries & Illness:

Our school is equipped to handle minor injuries, such as superficial cuts and bruises. If we have any concerns as to the severity of an injury, we will contact parents unless the circumstances require immediate contact to emergency services, in which case the school will call 911 first and then the parents will be contacted. Parents will be contacted in the event their child becomes ill or injured at school. Most head injuries will require a child to be picked up and can return with a note from the Dr. The school faculty will use their own discretion to determine if the child is well enough to remain at school.

Medications:

In most cases, Downtown Jewish Preschool will not administer prescription or non-prescription medications. In the event that we determine that we can administer medication, it can only be done with a filled-out Authorization for Medication form.

Illness:

We certainly hope that everyone stays healthy, but we must state our health policy for the record. Our primary consideration is for the well-being of all students and staff, so while it is normal and even healthy for young children to be sick in the early years (it helps develop a strong immune system), communicability remains an important consideration in deciding if a child is well enough to be in school. **We reserve the right to ask you to keep your child home until we feel comfortable having the child back in school, regardless of a doctor's note or 24-hour waiting period.**

Children must be kept home, or will be sent home, when they have the symptoms of any illness. This policy protects the recovering child, whose resistance to new infection is low, as well as his/her classmates and teachers.

Keep your child home if he or she has:

- Diarrhea - acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency.
- Vomiting - one or more episodes of vomiting within a period of 24 hours.
- Fever - elevated temperature over 99.5 F.
- Strep throat - sore throat or constant cough.
- Conjunctivitis - red eyes with a discharge, often a sign of conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), which is highly contagious.
- Rashes - skin rash, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one day.
- Runny nose - especially with green mucus.
- On Antibiotics - has begun an antibiotic for a contagious condition less than 24 hours ago
- Chicken Pox - Child may return to school when all lesions are crusted over.
- Head Lice - The DJP has a no-nit policy. Child may return to school after the removal of all lice and nits.
- Pin Worms - Child may return to school 24 hours after treatment.
- Fifth Disease - Also known as Parvovirus, Fifth Disease is a mild illness and not serious in healthy children. However, it can cause serious complications during pregnancy. Because there could be pregnant employees and parents at our school, we ask that your child stay at home if you notice any symptoms such as low-grade fever, tiredness, or cold-like symptoms. Once your child breaks out in the rash (which looks like slapped cheeks and/or a lacy itchy rash on the trunk of the body) they are no longer contagious.
- Hand-Foot-Mouth – needs at least 2 weeks or until all symptoms are clear.
- Fussy – has been fussy, cranky or out of sorts for the last 12 hours.
- Had very little sleep the night before.

Children can return to school 24 hours **after** the fever or symptoms have disappeared. The day the child has fever is not part of the 24 hours. The first day the child is sick is considered a sick day and the counting only begins on the following day.

Children too sick to participate in full program activities, including outside play, should be at home. Please call school when your child is absent due to illness. If your child becomes

ill in school, or if we notice any concerning marks, or fever is at 99.5 or more, we will call you to take him/her home. If we can't reach you, designated emergency contact numbers will be called. The school reserves the right to determine if a child is well enough to be in school.

Each morning, the teachers in each room will conduct a quick health check on each child as they arrive. They will check for runny noses, fever and any other common symptom. They will also be noting down any bruises or bumps a child may have.

***Head injuries.**

Injuries at home and at school are common for young children. Most injuries can easily be treated with ice and/or a band aid by our loving staff. However, we do take head injuries very seriously. If a child hits their head at school, we will determine the severity and upon our decision the child may be asked to be picked up and taken home or, in the event of what appears to be a serious injury, we will call 911. The child can return to school only after a medical evaluation and a note from a healthcare provider ensuring the child is ok and safe to return to school.

STAY CONNECTED

Nurturing Strong Partnerships: Our Communication Guidelines

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a successful preschool experience. At DJP, we believe in building strong partnerships with families to ensure every child feels safe, supported, and ready to learn. When we work together, we can create a nurturing environment where children thrive, both physically and emotionally.

To help us foster this collaboration and keep you informed, we're streamlining our communication channels into a consolidated communication platform.

Here's how we'll be staying connected:

1. School-Wide Announcements:

- We'll use e-mail and the Kaymbu app for important announcements, upcoming events, and school-wide information.
- Please make it a priority to check your e-mails and Kaymbu app regularly and respond promptly when necessary. Timely responses ensure you receive all vital updates and help us keep our records accurate.
You will need to allow for notifications in the Kaymbu app

2. Quick Reminders:

- For quick reminders about special days, deadlines, or unforeseen schedule changes, we'll use the DJP Admin WhatsApp and Kaymbu announcements

(Once the whole school is streamlined into Kaymbu will use Kaymbu only).

3. Child-Specific Communication:

- All communication regarding your child will be sent through the secure Kaymbu app.
- This includes:
 - Daily notes (Explorers, Investigators & Innovators)
 - Incident reports
 - Requests for supplies
 - Any personal information that needs your attention
- The Kaymbu app also allows you to reply directly to messages, facilitating easy two-way communication with your child's teacher.
- For non-urgent messages, please allow up to 24 hours for a response.

4. Photos and TSG Documentations

- Daily photos will be posted on our private Facebook page or KAYMBU.
- Several times a year, you will receive a personalized portfolio, which is an assemblage of documentation that covers the 38 integral age-appropriate skills and developments.

5. Direct Contact with Teachers during school hours:

- If you need to speak with your child's teacher directly during school hours, please call the office.
- They will return your call during their class's designated nap time or break.
- Please note: To protect privacy and maintain appropriate professional boundaries, teachers' personal phone numbers will not be provided for communication purposes

6. Emergencies:

- In the event of an emergency, please call the school office directly or contact the Director immediately.

7. Parent Class Representatives:

- We would welcome one parent per class to be the designated neutral communication liaison between the school and class families.
- If you are interested in this position, please notify the Director.

This position expectations will include being the appointed liaison regarding questions that concern the class, as well as being the representative for class parties, school-wide events, gifts for staff, and other PTO-type responsibilities. This position is voluntary, and the

confidentiality of all student information is maintained.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline at DJP will take the form of positive classroom management. Our goal is for the child to learn self-management skills and inner control through participation in a safe, loving and well-planned environment. Children are provided with consistent routines and realistic limits and expectations.

Our teachers and staff are all trained in the Conscious Discipline Program, as well as Mindful-ish Social Emotional Behavior training. Our classroom is equipped with the “feeling buddies” and a “quiet space or safe space”. Parents are encouraged to explore Conscious Discipline and Mindful-ish SEB at your own convenience.

Children shall not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating or frightening. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited. We ensure that age appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for children in our care.

SPECIAL NEEDS:

We are a school family working together to ensure the ultimate environment and resources for your child's success. When additional support and specialists are needed, it is mandatory for parents to comply with the schools' recommendations and requirements.

Fran Rubio Katz is our on-call Social Emotional Behavioral specialist who guides our staff with consistent professional development as well as appropriate Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.

Our OT, PT and Speech specialists will conduct screenings at the beginning of the year. These screenings are voluntary and strongly encouraged. If it is deemed that a child needs extra support in the classroom, whether it is Social Emotional, Behavioral, Speech, OT or PT, you are required to work with the school and coordinate the support needed.

All fees including screenings, evals, and meetings with the staff for additional individualized care from our Specialists (Behavioral, OT, PT Speech etc.) are the responsibility of the parents or guardians and will be paid directly to the specialists. If you choose to use a different specialist, it must be pre-approved by our administration.

Parents are responsible to ensure that their child is getting the additional support they need so that we can be partners in the child's achievements.

If a parent refuses to cooperate with the recommended additional assistance required, we have the right to terminate your contract.

BITING POLICY AT DJP

Biting is a subject that is disturbing to our children, parents and staff. It is typical for young children to use their mouths for exploring their world and expressing their feelings.

There are many reasons toddlers may bite. Sometimes the biting is related to teething. Sometimes toddlers bite to express feelings they cannot express with words yet. We have seen children bite when they are frustrated, and we have seen them bite in excitement of a happy moment. No one can predict which children may bite. We are ready to help toddlers who do bite to learn other behavior. We are sympathetic to both the biter and the child being bitten.

The mission of the school is to enhance and promote positive development and growth. Our daily routines and schedules as well as trained staff are in place to eliminate as much frustration as possible. The atmosphere in our class is calm and serene, cheerful and happy. The activities are age appropriate and developmentally suitable for toddlers. We model calm behavior and discipline when necessary.

If a bite occurs, we help the child who was bitten. We reassure him or her and care for the bite. If the skin is not broken, we wash it with soap and water and use a cold pack. If the skin is broken, we follow medical advice – clean the bite with soap and water and cover it to protect it from getting dirty or infected. We will send home a note to both sets of parents indicating that a bite happened and what we did. In accordance with our confidentiality policy, parents will not be informed of the name of the child who did the biting.

After the appropriate medical attention is received by the child bitten, we attend to the biter.

Our response to the biter is dependent on the circumstances of the bite. We will usually have the biter help in the medical care of the bitten. Getting an ice pack and soothing the child. We encourage the biter to look at the bite and the child's sad face, to absorb the impact his bite had on the other child. Our overall message is to help the child learn the appropriate way to express his emotions, and/or needs that he was seeking. We help give him language either verbally or bodily to share his feelings.

If biting is persistent, we will collect data to try and determine a pattern or trigger and will document the occurrences and information we glean. We will work on a plan to prevent further biting behavior that may include any of the following:

1. Biting necklace and or pacifier or chewy toy.
2. Mandatory Shadow
3. OT/ PT eval
4. Social Emotional Behavior eval

We put our energy into both keeping the children in the classroom safe as well as helping the child with the biting issue. The plan will include the parents, so they can help and be aware of what is being done and the progress made.

We ask for parents to keep us abreast of what they are doing at home and how the child is progressing.

Children who bite at school don't necessarily bite at home. It is important for us to be consistent with the plan. Communication and cooperation are key to a positive outcome.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is primarily based on Developmentally Appropriate Practices and inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach. It is combined with our Judaic curriculum to form a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate program. It is designed to promote each child's intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth. All games and activities are skill-based and goal-oriented, so that the children are growing with everything that they do. We like to call it 'Intentional Play.'

Intellectual:

We encourage the children to develop self-motivation, active investigational skills through questioning, exploring and observing, and the thinking and problem-solving abilities needed to thrive in a world of challenge and competition. Children are surrounded with books, literacy experiences and exposure to the alphabet to prepare them for pre-reading and the reading that follows.

Social:

We encourage each child to work and play with others, to develop language communication skills, to respect the rights and privacy of their peers and most of all to develop feelings of kindness, courtesy, helpfulness and acceptance.

The ability to work alone and with others in a positive way is extremely important. Children get to practice these skills daily as they play and work together and alone. Adults

facilitate child interactions and model appropriate words and actions to use with friends, to join a group, to resolve conflict, to problem-solve together, etc. This is not something that can be mastered in one day. Social skills are developed and practiced throughout the year.

Emotional:

Children are encouraged to develop a positive self-concept, to understand the difference between right and wrong and to develop responsibility. They are encouraged to recognize that people are different and to be accepting of others and we help them learn and practice appropriate ways to respond to others and to express their feelings constructively.

Physical:

Children are provided constant opportunities to develop their small and large muscle skills, to develop finger strength and dexterity, and arm, eye and body coordination. All students have a minimum of 40 minutes of combined indoor and outdoor physical activity for every three- and one-half hours in care per day.

Fine Motor Skills:

Eye-hand coordination and the strengthening of small muscles (particularly in the hands and fingers) are very important in early childhood to prepare children for gripping instruments and writing. It is also important for them to be able to manipulate materials in various ways as they explore and experiment. We work on these fine-motor skills using play dough, clay, sand, blocks, art materials such as scissors, woodworking tools, small manipulative games, puzzles and writing instruments.

Gross Motor Skills:

Exercising the body's large muscles is important because the children are still working on coordination, balance, cross body movements and more. Outdoor play is a daily part of the program, where children can run, jump, climb, slide, kick and throw balls, swing and shoot basketballs. In addition, once a week the children have Super Soccer Stars and yoga.

Math Skills:

Many of the manipulatives that help develop fine motor skills, as previously mentioned, also teach math skills and concepts. E.g. building blocks of various sorts automatically offer lessons in balance, geometry, measurement, estimation, etc. Children are encouraged to count objects. This gives them a better concept of what numbers mean. Grouping, sorting, graphing, and matching are some other activities that are often taking place as the children play in class.

Language Skills:

Language is developed with the teachers modeling and encouraging the children to talk, to listen, even to write, at every opportunity, what they're observing or doing as they work/play. Books are an important and constant part of the curriculum and are always available to the children. Children are also given access to writing materials and art utensils and are encouraged to experiment with them.

Science & Nature:

A child's life is full of real things to observe, discover and experience. They then have opportunities to make predictions, see cause and effect, and be actively involved in science experiments. Outside, children find worms, bugs, plants, flowers, etc. Each of these discoveries becomes a miniature science project. The children will plant and tend our very own organic garden. They will be able to see and taste the fruits of their labor as their seeds grow and blossom over the year.

Art & Drama:

Exploration and expression are two ways of assessing the inner self. Art is a perfect forum to accomplish this. Art is not forced upon children but is made available in a most aesthetically pleasing way. Art activities are designed to be open-ended and process oriented rather than product oriented. Children are offered different media and a large variety of tools with which they are encouraged to explore and experiment.

Children also have the chance to play different roles as they interact and play side by side with their peers. In the dramatic play area children choose to be moms, dads, babies and animals (pets). In playing out these characters, children gain socialization skills and play out what they have seen modeled to them.

Music & Movement:

Music and song are an integral part of the program. Children will learn new songs, sing old songs, sing familiar songs, make up songs, listen to songs, and sing with and without music. Most of the time movement is a part of any music in the class. Rhythms and repetitions are subsequently introduced through music (which are helpful for math cognition).

Once a week the children have formal 'Music Together' time with the famous Miss Sue, formerly from Nova Mommy n Me.

Alternating Enrichment:

Our Enrichments are carefully chosen and curated to enhance the age-appropriate development and skills of our preschoolers **all taught by masters in their field**. Enrichments may include: Music Together, Super Soccer Stars, Yoga, Martial Arts, and Clay.

Tradition and Jewish Pride:

Lesson plans at DJP are built around the Jewish events, influencing the children at the time that they are being taught. Weather changes, special animal habits, national celebrations and holiday seasons all determine what will be brought into the classroom at any time of year. All these are laced into the general curriculum, to allow the children to learn from what is going on around them. The children experience all the Jewish holidays through art, song, dramatic play, language and literacy. They pray each day and make blessings on their food.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Downtown Jewish Center (DJC) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school-administered programs, or any other privileges or activities generally accorded or made available to DJP students. However, as a religious institution DJP reserves the right to deny admission or to terminate the enrollment of persons whose lifestyle, words, actions, or otherwise do not align with DCJ's statement of faith, code of conduct, or other policies.

BINDING ARBITRATION POLICY:

Dispute Resolution Policy. Parents are prohibited from suing DJP or any of its employees, volunteers, or other agents in any civil court over any matter relating to or arising out of their child's enrollment at DJP (except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision); doing so will constitute sufficient grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion of the child's enrollment. Parents are to first address all potential claims, disputes, or causes of action through good-faith discussions (up to 30 days) with the DJP Director and/or Board, then through mediation with the National Center for Life and Liberty or another agreed mediator. If mediation fails, the matter must go to final, binding arbitration, or if no arbitrator is agreed upon, to the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator's decision will be final. This dispute resolution requirement does NOT apply to DJP's efforts to collect past-due tuition and fees, which DJP may pursue through a collection agency or otherwise. Parents are responsible for all fees and costs associated with such collection.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

At DJP we share the values of traditional Judaism, Jewish customs, culture, tradition, holidays, values, and Torah including at minimum, the following.

- Belief in 1 God
- Belief in the traditional Torah, and the Commandments

- Traditional roles of men and woman in Jewish custom
- Sanctity and traditional customs of Shabbat, Jewish Holidays and Kosher

OUR STAFF

The adult's role in the children's journey is to support and facilitate their growth and development. To assume this role, to learn with young children, is a great privilege and responsibility. Teaching is a mission, a valued and time-honored Jewish tradition. We look for staff that are passionate and will offer a nurturing experience for the children.

Our teachers have a deep understanding of children and the way they think and have the desire to create meaningful relationships with the children. All our teachers believe in the importance of seeing each child as an individual. Our teachers plan and adapt the curriculum and the environment to meet the needs of each child.

In the Reggio Emilia approach, the teacher sees herself as a learner, alongside the children, open to new thoughts and ideas. The teacher listens carefully to the children, observes and documents their work, and provokes and stimulates their thinking. As teachers, we are committed to strengthening and enriching our knowledge of young children by continuing our own education. Our staff is made up of teachers, all of whom are chosen for their professionalism, as well as their caring and compassionate personalities.

All staff participate in annual in-service training, in order to remain alert to the ever-changing needs of today's families and to the findings of current research. Staff development is ongoing throughout the year. Our staff is also trained in First Aid, CPR, anaphylactic care, as well as lockdown procedures.

See also the "Understanding Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) and our Tiered Approach at DJP" – a separate document from the handbook.

A FINAL NOTE

The DJP is a collaborative project between the Downtown Jewish Center and our community. We need your input and support to make this project flourish. We depend on your feedback to create a better service, and welcome suggestions, volunteer hours, and contributions. This community project will flourish, as we partner to build a meaningful Jewish experience for our families.

Through our combined efforts we can create an environment of warmth, discovery and learning.

Thank you and Welcome!