



Gan Shalom

Parent Handbook

Temple Shalom of Chicago, Gan Shalom Early Childhood Center
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Temple Sholom of Chicago's Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center. The Board of Directors of Temple Sholom, the Rabbis, Cantor and the staff of Gan Shalom are pleased to welcome you and your children to our school.

Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center is part of Temple Sholom of Chicago, a private not-for-profit Jewish organization. Temple Sholom is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism. Affiliation with the Temple offers a great financial advantage to Gan Shalom families, but is not a pre-requisite of enrollment in our school.

Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center is licensed by the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and by the City of Chicago. We are also affiliated with the Community Foundation for Jewish Education.

This handbook is designed to introduce you to our school: its philosophy, programs, policies and procedures. Please use it as a reference guide throughout the year. Also, please feel free to contact the Gan Shalom office if you have any questions or concerns.

We look forward to an exciting year together!



Rimma Khodosh
Director of Gan Shalom Early Childhood Center

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Philosophy

The philosophy of Temple Shalom of Chicago's Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center is to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate environment that meets the needs of young children and parents. A positive self-image and a strong Jewish identity are the highlights of the program.

Gan Shalom's extended day program is based on the idea that families can combine positive parenting with the outside demands of work or pursuit of higher education. For the child, a wholesome day care center helps promote a healthy self-image and independence. Parents can feel comfortable knowing their child is being cared for in a pleasant, nurturing and developmentally sound environment.

Our center's staff is dedicated to strengthening family life by teaching Jewish values and traditions, based on the tenets of Reform Judaism. It is important for parents to understand that children will be imbued with these concepts. We have created a caring environment that encourages your child to begin at his/her own level and develop emotionally, spiritually, socially, physically and cognitively.

Each family comes to school with a unique set of experiences, feelings and characteristics. It is our sincere desire to be responsive and helpful and to actively assist you with your questions or concerns. We are here for you as well as for your child. Please remember that open communication between parents and staff is the real key to successful early childhood education. Visits to the classroom are an important way for parents to feel assured that their children's needs are being met in the best possible way.

The preschool years are the formative years, the time when behavior patterns, value systems and attitudes emerge. It is therefore essential to our philosophy to provide individualized attention for our students.

The framework for our program is:

- *A nurturing environment
- *Staff trained in child development
- *Age-appropriate curriculum
- *Safe, spacious and well-maintained physical environment
- *Developmentally appropriate, stimulating and ample materials and equipment
- *Strong communication with parents
- *Flexibility
- *Excellent ratio of childcare providers to children

Within this framework, we can accomplish our goals by:

- *Building a positive self-image and a strong Jewish identity in children
- *Developing patterns of learning and problem solving
- *Developing self-reliance
- *Developing empathy and concern for others
- *Developing an ability to cooperate with others
- *Providing a healthy, safe and enjoyable child-oriented environment for optimum growth and development

Curriculum

Gan Shalom uses a developmental approach in which children's play activities are viewed as indispensable precursors to the academic activities of elementary school. A child learns through play. Through play, children learn to be part of a group, to share and to become friends. In play, children also feel the freedom to try new ideas, practice skills and imitate adult roles. All other learning is based on this fundamental ability. Therefore, our environment is carefully planned and fosters discovery, learning and exploration.

At Gan Shalom we also use the Reggio Emilia approach to learning. This means that projects begin with teachers observing and questioning children about the topic of interest. Based on children's responses, teachers introduce materials, questions, and opportunities that provoke children to further explore the topic. Concepts that we weave daily into our curriculum are: math, science, language development, creative arts, music, movement and drama. We also introduce Hebrew and Judaism by exploring and experiencing traditions, rituals and holiday celebrations. During free play time, children choose learning centers where they can explore and experiment for as long as they like to.

The Nursery Program

Nursery programs are available for 2, 2 ½ and 3 year olds. These programs are half day. The Junior Kindergarten program is available for 4 year old children. These children have the option of attending a half day or a full day program. Parents contract with the school for a 10 month period. Children are enrolled for the same number of days and the same days of the week for the entire school year. Children remain with the same teachers throughout the school year. Children transition from one class to another at the end of the 10 month school year.

The 2 Year Old Drop-off Program meets two days a week – Tuesdays and Thursdays. This program is for children who have successfully separated from parents or caregivers and are comfortable in a classroom environment. This class starts at 9:00AM and ends at 11:30AM.

The 2 ½ Year Old Program meets 3 days per week- Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This program is for children who have successfully separated from parents or caregivers and are comfortable in a classroom environment. This class starts at 9:00AM and ends at 11:30AM.

The 3 Year Old Program has the option of 3 or 5 days per week. The 3- day class meets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The classes start at 9:00AM and end at 11:30AM.

The 4 Year Old Junior Kindergarten Program meets 5 days per week. Children in the half day program attend class from 9:00AM until 11:30AM. Children in the full day program attend class from 9:00AM until 3:00PM. The full day program includes lunch and enrichments.

Nursery School Options for 2 ½, 3 and 4-Year Olds

Lunch Program

Children in the 2 ½, 3 and 4 year old programs may stay for a one-hour lunch program (at an additional fee) on the days they attend the nursery program. Gan Shalom follows Jewish dietary laws as well as the USDA's guidelines including dairy products, fruits, vegetables and whole grain products. We will work with you to meet the special dietary needs of your child. Please be sure to notify us if your child has any food allergies. We will post a sign in the classroom, add your child's name to our school allergy list and monitor all snacks and treats.

Children eat in small groups with teachers. Story time or a group activity follows the meal. Children enroll by semester on a first-come, first-served basis. Children may enroll after the semester has begun and the fee will be pro-rated.

Enrichment Program

Children in the 3 year old nursery program may stay for the 1 ½ hour enrichment program, which meets from 12:30PM – 2:00PM. This program is held four days per week, Monday through Thursday, and requires an additional fee. Each day is devoted to a specific area: music, drama, fun and fitness, Hebrew or art. Children enroll by semester. Children may enroll after the semester has begun if space allows and the fee will be pro-rated.

Extended Day Program

The extended day program is available for students 2 through 4. Parents contract with the school for a 12 month period. Children are enrolled for the same number of days and the same days of the week for the entire school year. The extended day program continues through summer, with a one-week break before school resumes in the fall.

Children in the 2 year old class spend the day together in small groups. The program is based on developmentally and age appropriate principles for two year olds.

Children who are 3 and 4 years old are integrated into the nursery program classes in the morning.

Afternoons for all children in the extended day program begin with lunch followed by a story or quiet activity and then nap time. After nap, the afternoon is spent in a group activity, outdoor or gym activity and free play. The afternoon provides time for children to explore different enrichment activities and continue the weekly theme.

Extended Day Hours

Morning Program for 3 and 4 year olds is from 7:30AM until 9:00AM. From 9:00AM until 1:00PM the children are integrated into regular programs for 3 year olds or Junior Kindergarten. Three year old children nap from 1:00PM-3:00PM. Four year old children participate in the full day Junior Kindergarten program until 3:00PM.

Afternoon Program for 3 and 4 year olds begins at 3:00PM and ends at 6:00PM.

Two Year Old Extended Day Program is from 7:30AM until 6:00PM.

Other Programs

Parent-Child Classes

Gan Shalom has a variety of parent-child classes for children 4 months through 30 months. These classes are held once or twice per week depending upon the age of the child. There are 60 classes for twice a week programs and 30 classes for once a week programs. Additional information on these exciting and fun programs for you and your little one can be obtained from the Gan Shalom office.

Summer Camp

For eight weeks beginning in June, Gan Shalom becomes a fun-filled summer day camp. Our summer program has an emphasis on outdoor activities related to current learning units. Water activities, in our wading pools for younger children and at a local swimming facility for older children, are part of the fun. Children may enroll for the first or second four weeks or for the entire eight-week program. Lunch is an available option and requires pre-registration and an additional fee. Families with children enrolled in the nursery program during the school year will receive summer camp information in early spring. Extended day children are automatically enrolled in the summer camp program unless otherwise specified by the parents.

Program Supplements

Snacks

Children in the nursery and extended day programs have a mid-morning snack every day. Children in the extended day and full day Junior Kindergarten also have a daily mid-afternoon snack. Birthday parties and other special events are often held at snack time.

Lunch

Children in the extended day program and the full day Junior Kindergarten program receive lunch every day. Children enrolled in the lunch program receive lunch on the days that they are enrolled. The menus are well balanced and varied. Gan Shalom follows Jewish dietary laws as well as the USDA's guidelines including dairy products, fruits, vegetables and whole grain products. We will work with you to meet the special dietary needs of your child. Please be sure to notify us if your child has any food allergies. We will post a sign in the classroom, add your child's name to our school allergy list and monitor all snacks and treats.

Children help teachers prepare for lunch by setting up and helping to serve lunch. Small groups of children sit with teachers at the lunch table. This is a congenial and relaxing time. Children also help teachers clean up after lunch.

Gan Shalom is a **NUT FREE** institution.

Daily Schedule

It is important for your child to arrive at Gan Shalom on time each day.

Timeliness helps promote structure for the children and ensures a smoother transition into the day. Daily activities include the following:

Free Play or Activity Time

Children require the choice and independence gained from free play. **They show us consistently through their behavior that this segment of the morning is crucial.** During this time children enjoy individualized attention, with teachers observing and interacting with the children as needed. Children are also able to develop and perfect their socialization skills. Their choices include: science corner, manipulatives, puzzles, blocks, dramatic play, library and art. In addition, children learn how to clean up once free play is over. This emphasizes order, limits and respect for the environment and others. Moreover, it teaches cooperation and responsibility.

Circle Time

In this carefully planned activity, children sit together as a group. They are encouraged to express ideas and to discuss “life events.” Children also learn new concepts and further develop their vocabularies. It is a time for puppets, felt board stories, new songs, acting, finger plays, storytelling and organized games. Additionally, teachers use this time to provide information about the daily schedule, week’s unit and theme and to teach the concepts of the calendar and seasons.

Gross Motor Activity Time

Children enjoy Gan Shalom’s outdoor equipment and indoor gym facilities. These activities stimulate the development of gross motor skills. Once a week, each nursery class participates in a movement class led by our movement specialist.

Snack

Children help set tables for snack. It is a time to socialize and to develop healthy habits such as hand washing before eating. The children also learn to clean up after themselves when they are finished.

Children in the extended day and full day Junior Kindergarten programs have the following activities in their afternoon schedule:

Lunch

See description above.

Toilet Learning

Children do not need to be out of diapers when entering Gan Shalom, but please let us know when you feel your child is ready to begin the toilet learning process. Together, we will work out a plan that will make this a pleasant experience for your child. Soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag and placed in your child's cubby.

Nap Time

Most children will nap at school, even if they will not nap at home. They are required to relax and rest without disturbing others. Families send a blanket to school for their child. A pillow, stuffed animal or doll may also be brought for nap. Cots are provided. Parents are responsible for washing blankets and sheets weekly.

Afternoon Activities

At 3:30 PM children have an afternoon circle and activity followed by snack and free play. The afternoon provides time to follow through on the morning unit or theme and also explore enrichment activities. Children also enjoy supplemental activities and a relaxed, homelike atmosphere to end their school day.

Your Child at School

The First Week of School

Separating from loved ones is a difficult transition at every stage of life. It is more so the first time a child separates from his/her parents. Try to sort out your own feelings before you come to school since your anxiety or ambivalence will affect your child. Communicate your concerns openly to your child's teachers. Parents set an important example by showing their children that they approve of school, teachers and the positive experience that school will provide. Your positive attitude makes it easier for your child to relax in this new environment.

Gan Shalom staff believes in connecting to each individual child within his/her comfortable home environment. Thus, home visits by your child's teachers are scheduled in late summer prior to the beginning of the school year. After home visits, nursery school classes will have "Getting to Know You" days to ease the transition. Parents stay for these sessions to help children with the transition. Parents of younger extended day children should plan to stay for as long as the child needs them. Often, you will need to stay for the first few days of school. For both groups, teachers assist parents in deciding when it is appropriate for the parent to leave the room. Be prepared to be on call the first week of school, should your child have difficulty leaving you. Some children may seem to adjust, but may have late reactions to separation. These are all normal responses to this new situation. It may take up to a month for a child to fully adjust and participate in all classroom activities. Many times a child needs to observe and is satisfied to do so until he/she feels comfortable and safe.

It is important for all preschool children to have calm, pleasant and unhurried separations. Make sure you tell your child when you are leaving the room, as he/she needs to develop a trusting relationship. Sneaking out of the classroom can only hurt that relationship. You can send a family picture for your child to keep in the class. Children enjoy being able to look at the picture in the middle of the day.

Celebrations and Special Events

Birthday Parties

At Gan Shalom, children's birthdays are important and special occasions. We invite parents and family to join their child's celebration. Parents should consult the classroom teachers for a specific time and date when the birthday can be celebrated in class.

We encourage you to bring treats for the birthday celebration. State regulations do not allow us to serve home baked goods. **Accordingly, all treats must be purchased.** Also, any treats should be Kosher style, i.e. no mixing of meat and dairy.

It is appropriate to reinforce the concept of tzedakah (charity) at this special time when the children themselves are receiving gifts from others. This is an important aspect of our Jewish celebration of life. Children can better understand this concept through action. For example, you may bring in a small gift for the child's classroom or library or make a donation in honor of the child's birthday. Involve your child as much as possible. Ask your child what the classroom needs; add your child's favorite books to the library or have your child choose a favorite charity for a donation. By doing so, you lay the foundation for your child to incorporate tzedakah into his/her life and to have positive feelings about the act of giving. If you need additional suggestions, do not hesitate to ask your child's teacher or the director.

Teachers will be happy to distribute invitations to home birthday parties **only when the entire class is invited.**

Tot Shabbat

On the third Saturday of every month, Temple Shalom holds a special Shabbat service for families with children ages 0 to 5 years old. The service begins at 9:30AM. This Shabbat experience is designed especially for preschool children and includes singing, stories, a Shabbat related activity and a snack of challah and juice. Tot Shabbat is a wonderful way to introduce your child to synagogue worship and ritual.

Family Shabbat Dinners

Gan Shalom families gather at the Temple on several Friday evenings to share a Shabbat dinner and special service. The warm Shabbat feeling and opportunity to share Shabbat with other Gan Shalom families makes this a memorable experience and a special favorite with children and parents alike.

Chanukah Parties

Each class holds a Chanukah party where the children participate in singing songs, playing games and eating latkes. **Parents and other family members are expected to take part on this day.**

Purim Carnivals

Our high school students sponsor the Temple Sholom Purim Carnival. We set aside special games for families with young children. Game booths with prizes, snacks, lunch, a raffle and other activities make for a fun-filled Purim experience for the whole family. Tickets may be purchased in advance from the Religious School office.

Passover Seders

Gan Shalom holds model Seders for all students. We use an age-appropriate Haggadah for each group and parents assist in preparing the ritual items and setting up for the Seder. This is a family event that provides the opportunity for children and parents to learn and practice the traditions of Passover. **Thus, parents and other family members are expected to take part.**

Field Trips

Field trips during the school year reinforce themes and concepts learned at school and they provide different educational experiences for the children. We provide parents with information ahead of time about destinations, costs, etc. Signed field trip forms must be on file in the school office before children can participate on these trips. Parents or caregivers are always needed to help chaperone field trips.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences are held twice a year. Conference days are listed on your school calendar. Your child's teacher will ask you to sign up for a conference time. **Nursery school and Junior Kindergarten classes are not in session on conference days.** The extended day program continues during conference days, with conferences scheduled to best meet the schedules of parents. Conferences afford parents and teachers an important opportunity to share information regarding a child's progress.

Additional meetings can be scheduled whenever a parent, teacher or the director feels the need for additional information or assistance. Teachers need to know about any major changes at home that may affect a child's behavior or attitude, such as the birth of a sibling, the serious illness of a family member or a parent being out of town. Although informal discussions of a brief nature occur daily at drop-off and pick-up, please remember that this is not a good time for teachers to have in-depth conversations with parents. Please provide your child's teacher with important information written and placed in her mailbox located in the director's office.

Arrival and Dismissal

As you enter and exit the building you must sign in/out with security and present your Gan Shalom ID to security personnel. Each family will receive an ID provided by the Gan Shalom office. Children in all classes are then brought to the classrooms by a parent or caregiver. Teachers greet children as they arrive. Parents or caregivers must also sign each child in and out each day by the child's classroom. Children are picked up from the classroom at dismissal time. **PLEASE BE PROMPT!** Teachers have other responsibilities to attend to after class and cannot be expected to wait for late pick-ups. If you find that you are unavoidably delayed, please make every effort to contact Gan Shalom so we can reassure your child and plan to care for him/her until your arrival. There may be a charge for additional care provided for your child during this time.

Whenever someone other than the regular person will pick up your child, you must provide a written note or message on the sign in/out sheet. We will not and cannot release your child to anyone not included on your signed pick-up list. The staff is instructed to request identification if they are unsure about the identity of the person picking up your child.

Late Pick up Fees for Extended Day Program

Picking children up after 6:00PM will result in a late fee of \$1 per minute. The late fee must be paid by the next school day. More than six late pick-ups per school year may result in dismissal from the program. There will be no exceptions to the late pick-up fees and policy.

Please help us by arranging alternate pick-up when an emergency arises. Notify the school immediately so that your child may be informed of the change in schedule. If no arrangements have been made, and the school has not been notified, the people designated on your child's emergency contact list will be called to pick up your child and/or the Chicago Police Department will be contacted to assume custody. This will only take place if parents are more than one hour late and no authorized alternative can be made.

Attendance

If your child is sick or has to be absent for another reason, please call the Gan Shalom office between 7:30AM and 8:45AM on the day of the absence. PHONE: 773-525-4867. Information about pre-arranged absences, such as out-of-town trips, should be given to the teacher well in advance of the planned absence.

Bringing Items from Home to School

Children may bring books, tapes or items related to the weekly theme or unit to school at any time. Please label all items with your child's name. Toys may be brought to school only for show and tell when it is your child's turn. War game toys (guns, swords, etc.) are not allowed at school at any time. Additionally, please do not send gum or candy to school. In general it is best to avoid bringing

expensive toys or equipment to school. If these items are lost or damaged, young children are often inconsolable and the school cannot assume responsibility for such losses.

Cubbies

Each child is assigned a space in a cubby, which is labeled with his/her name. Art projects, notes from the teacher, notices of upcoming events, weekly newsletters and other important items will be in your child's cubby for you to take home each day. Please check your child's cubby every day and take and review all of the information.

School Clothes

Please send your child to school in play clothes! We suggest clothes that are comfortable and easy for a child to manage. Make sure there are no back zippers, difficult snaps or hard-to-deal with overalls. We provide smocks for painting and messy activities, but they do not fully protect everything. Please have children wear clothes that can get dirty or stained. Additionally, we request that children do not wear open-toed shoes. We also ask that they wear comfortable and unrestricted clothes (i.e. no dresses) on gym and movement days.

Listen to the weather forecast. Children will go outdoors whenever possible and should have appropriate clothing.

Please provide a complete extra set of clothing (in a large plastic Ziploc bag) to keep at school in your child's cubby. All items must be labeled with your child's name. The required extra clothes include: underwear, socks, shirt, pants (or dress/skirt), a sweater/sweatshirt and shoes. Soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag and placed in your child's cubby. Please check periodically to make sure your child's extra set of clothing is the correct size and appropriate as seasons change and children grow.

Please label all clothing with your child's name!

Parent Organization

The Parent Committee of Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center is an organization composed of the parents of Gan Shalom students. All committee members must also be members in good standing of Temple Shalom of Chicago. The Committee is an arm of the Temple's Religious Education Committee and has representation on the Temple's Board of Directors. The Committee works with the Gan Shalom and Temple Shalom staff to promote excellence in all areas of the school.

We work to achieve this goal by:

- *Introducing families to Temple Shalom and helping to integrate them into the Temple family;
- *Encouraging involvement of parents in their children's education;
- *Encouraging open communication among all members of the Gan Shalom family;
- *Fostering a spirit of community among parents;
- *Channeling the time, energy, and expertise of the parents for the benefit of the school;
- *Developing activities and events that enhance Gan Shalom and its goals.

We encourage parents who are not Temple Shalom members to be involved in Gan Shalom as room parents or by volunteering to help with class trips or special activities.

Temple Shalom of Chicago's Policy on Selecting Gan Shalom Parent Committee Members

- *Every parent applying for a place on the Committee must be a member of Temple Shalom of Chicago in good standing.
- *Every parent applying for a place on the Committee needs to be knowledgeable about the mission and goals of this Parent Committee.
- *Every parent applying for a place on the Committee should be available to serve for a one-year term and may reapply for the position annually.
- *Every parent applying for a place on the Committee needs a clear understanding of the process that involves the following steps:

1. Application (letting the administration of Gan Shalom know the parent's desire to serve on the Parent Committee);
2. Nomination by the Gan Shalom administration;
3. Consideration by Temple Shalom's professional staff and lay leadership;
4. Appointment by the President of Temple Shalom of Chicago.

Room Parents

Being a room parent is a great way to get to know your child's teachers and classmates and get involved at Gan Shalom. Each class can have two or three room parents. Room parents assist the teachers in organizing class celebrations. They also deliver important information to each family, such as school cancellations, calendar changes or planning educational field trips.

Gan Shalom Room Parent's Responsibilities

- Act as the liaison between the teachers and the class parents to fulfill requests for supplies, relay information about special events and help to coordinate these events.
- Act as the liaison between the Gan Shalom office and the class parents to relay information about school closings due to weather and/or about various special events.
- Act on behalf of the Gan Shalom Parent Committee by assisting with various volunteer efforts such as the Book Fair, Fundraising Event, Staff Appreciation Breakfast, etc.

Health and Safety

Health Forms

A medical report must be on file at Gan Shalom before your child's first day of school. The report must be dated within six months of enrollment and signed by the examining physician and the parents. When your child receives new immunizations, you must provide a signed statement from the physician indicating the type of immunization and date. If a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition or the family's beliefs, then the school must have documentation from a licensed health professional. For school purposes, this medical report will be valid for one year.

Please inform the office and your child's teacher in writing of any allergies or conditions requiring special care during school hours.

Illness at School

When a child becomes ill at Gan Shalom, the parents are notified immediately so they can make arrangements to have the child picked up. The child will be isolated from other children. **Parents are expected to be prompt.** In the event that parents cannot be reached we will call the emergency contact person listed on the emergency form. Please be certain that the information on the emergency form is current and the person listed understands our procedures and is willing to assist.

For the protection of all children, we cannot allow a child to remain at school if we see the following symptoms: temperature of 100 degrees or more, intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting, any undiagnosed rash or sore, discharge from eyes or ears, apparent signs of pain and/or discomfort. Please do not send children to school with any of these symptoms or with a contagious disease.

Absence Due to Illness

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, do not bring your child to school:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Intestinal disturbance, such as vomiting or diarrhea
- Undiagnosed sore or rash
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Sign of pain or discomfort
- Dysfunction of any type
- Any illness

Do not bring your child to school unless he/she has exhibited absolutely no symptoms for the 24 hours immediately preceding the next school day.

If your child has a contagious illness, please notify Gan Shalom immediately so that we may send a note home to advise you, so you are alert to the symptoms and can take appropriate precautions. When you contact Gan Shalom, please state the specific reason for the absence and how long you expect your child to be out of school.

Returning to School After an Illness

Symptoms often linger even after they are not visible. Before returning to class, your child must exhibit no symptoms for the 24 hours immediately preceding the next school day without taking fever reducing medication. Thus, children must be completely free from fever of 100 degrees or more, intestinal disturbances, sores, rashes, discharge, pain or other illness for 24 hours before returning to school. If you are at all unsure, please keep your child at home.

If your child has certain communicable diseases, such as strep throat or pink eye, when you notify Gan Shalom we will provide specific instructions for returning to school.

Please remember that a bad cold or flu can become an “epidemic.” We want to protect all of our children and teachers from illness and minimize absences.

Emergency Medical Procedure

When a medical emergency arises the school will contact local paramedics who will take the child, accompanied by a staff member, to the nearest Trauma Center hospital. School staff will notify parents immediately. If the staff are unable to notify a parent, they will notify the person listed on the emergency contact form.

Medication

Gan Shalom will only administer prescription medication to a child if it is accompanied by a written authorization from a parent and a written order signed by a physician (the physician’s name on the original pharmacy container will suffice). Prescription medications must be sent in the original pharmacy container with the child’s name, physician’s name, name of medication and specific instructions for its administration. Please notify the staff if any medication, including Tylenol, has been given to your child prior to entering school. This will help the teachers understand why a child may be acting lethargic or having an unusually difficult day.

Evacuation Procedures

If evacuating the building becomes necessary due to the threat of fire, bomb scare or other building emergency, the following procedures are followed:

- All children will be evacuated through the nearest exit and will be escorted to a safe distance from the building.
- Children will remain outside of the building until the fire/police department informs us that it is safe to reenter.

When instructed by the proper authorities, children will be escorted back into the building.

Fire Drills

In accordance with state law, fire drills are held on a regular basis. These drills are held by the fire department and are usually unannounced. While the fire department tries to select a warm and dry day, it is not possible for all fire drills to be held under ideal conditions. Parents should be aware that their children will be asked to exit the building without coats--simulating emergency conditions--even if the weather is cold. Children usually stay outside no more than five minutes.

We understand that these drills may be unsettling to some children. We actively work with all classes to allay fears and help the children understand the importance of assuring their safety. Parents can reinforce these ideas at home and should discuss any concerns with the teacher.

Emergency Closing Procedures

Decisions regarding weather closings are made as early as possible. We make every effort to provide parents with adequate notice. Gan Shalom participates in the Emergency Closing Center, which broadcasts school closings over participating radio and television stations. In addition, you can obtain school closing information by dialing 1-900-407-SNOW. (There is a 95-cent charge for the call).

Parking

Temple Shalom of Chicago has a parking lot on the southwest corner of Stratford and Lake Shore Drive. The entrance is on Stratford, directly across from the Stratford (main) entrance to the Temple. Gan Shalom parents may use the lot on an “as available” basis. The Temple tries to plan events with the Gan Shalom schedule in mind. There are times, however, when scheduling conflicts occur. Additional parking is available on side streets and on Lake Shore Drive after 9:00AM. **PLEASE DO NOT DOUBLE PARK.** You may not leave your car in the parking lot beyond drop off and pick up time. You must be in the building to have your car parked in the parking lot. When dropping off and picking up children from 8:00am to 1:00p.m., you can park on the north side of Stratford from the corner of LSD to the crosswalk. You may leave your car with emergency flashers on for a maximum of 15 minutes. This area is considered a loading zone. Certain spaces in the Temple lot are designated for specific Temple staff. Due to clergy and administrative staff schedules, assigned spots need to be available to them at all times. **DO NOT PARK IN ASSIGNED SPACES OR IN DESIGNATED HANDICAPPED SPACES. YOU RISK THE POSSIBILITY OF BEING TOWED.** Please remember to follow the one-way entrance and exit arrows for the safety of your children.

Tuition and Fees

Temple Sholom of Chicago members receive a reduction in tuition for all Nursery School, Extended Day, Parent-Toddler, and Summer Camp Programs. You can obtain additional information from the financial department of Temple Sholom.

Nursery Programs

Tuition for the Nursery Programs is paid in 4 installments:

- \$250 non-refundable and non-transferable deposit due with application
- 30% Due with signed contract by April 1
- 35% Due by July 1
- Final Payment due by October 15

Lunch and Enrichment Programs

Fees for both the Lunch and Enrichment Programs are prepaid by semester. The total semester's fee(s) is due when applying to these programs.

Extended Day Program

Tuition for the Extended Day Program is based on 49 weeks per year distributed over 12 months. Tuition is pre-paid monthly. Tuition is due on the 25th of each month for the following month. A late fee will be charged for payments received after the 25th of the month. There is no reduction in Extended Day tuition for illness, school holidays, vacations, and school closings due to an emergency or weather conditions. We also do not offer make up days for any missed classes.

Parent-Child Program

Tuition for Parent-Child classes are paid in 4 installments:

- \$250 non-refundable and non-transferable deposit due with application
- 30% Due with signed contract by April 1
- 35% Due by July 1
- Final Payment due by October 15

Summer Camp

Summer Camp Tuition for all programs are paid in 2 installments:

- 50% Non-refundable Deposit Due with Program Application
- Balance due by April 30th

ALL PAYMENTS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE AND NON-TRANSFERABLE.

Any variation to the original financial contract must be negotiated with the financial department of Temple Sholom of Chicago.

Discipline Policy

Guidelines for Student Discipline

For purposes of these guidelines, the term discipline means guiding and/or directing a child from random, impulsive or testing-out behavior to self-controlled, purposeful behavior. Rules and requirements are minimal, clear, and reasonable. To this end: always model and reinforce acceptable behavior.

- No staff member shall use corporal punishment. Discipline is never to be used as a punitive measure.
- Remain calm and composed. Maintain control over the situation. This will help to calm the child.
- Instructions to the child should be simple, clear and reasonable.
- When realistic, give the child the opportunity to make a choice, and allow him/her to follow through with that choice.
- Always make it clear to the child that his/her actions, not his/her personality, are unacceptable.
- Inform the child of the consequences of his/her actions.
- Food should not be used as a reward or punishment.
- No special privileges shall be given to any child.
- In a conflict, help the “hurt” child express his feelings followed by the “hurting” child’s feelings. Always acknowledge both children’s feelings.
- If a child becomes uncontrollably disruptive, remove him/her from the situation and help the child to regain control. The child will decide when they are ready to re-enter the group. The child needs your help to make this transition. If the child is consistently disruptive, inform the director who will contact the parents and schedule a conference.

In order to provide the children with the best possible school experience, the Gan Shalom staff maintains a consistent working relationship with the social work department at the Jewish Children & Family Services (JCFS). A social worker will visit Gan Shalom on a weekly basis to conduct classroom observations as well as provide evaluations, counseling and other services to families and children. Close communication with parents is essential to providing quality care. If staff feels that

a child should be evaluated, such recommendations will be made to parents. When a child has already been evaluated by outside professionals and/or school district, parents are expected to share with us the most recent evaluations so that we can work together to achieve agreed upon goals.

Dismissal by School Request

Occasionally, the Gan Shalom program is not able to meet the needs of a child and/or family. After attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, any child who demonstrates an inability to benefit from the type of care offered by Gan Shalom or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged from the facility. Circumstances which would necessitate the school to request withdrawal include:

- *Behavior that endangers the health and/or safety of the child or others
- *Failure to pay fees
- *Refusal of parents to adhere to school policies
- *Lack of readiness by a child to enter a group situation at the present time
- *Any situation in which the child's participation in the program is not in his/her best interest, as determined by the director

In all instances, when Gan Shalom decides that it is in the best interest of the child to terminate enrollment, Gan Shalom will work with the parents to meet the needs of the child and parents, such as referrals to other agencies or facilities. Dismissal will be at the discretion of the director with one week's notice.

Effective Ways For Parents to Negotiate Difficulties and Differences

- *Immediately bring your concern to the attention of your child's teachers.
- *If your issue has not been resolved, bring it to the attention of the director or the assistant to the director of Gan Shalom.
- *Finally, if your issue is still not resolved, bring your concern to the attention of Temple Shalom of Chicago's director of education.

Child's Name _____

I have read and understood Temple Shalom of Chicago Gan Shalom Early Childhood Education Center's Parent Handbook and Discipline Policy.

Parent Signature

Date

(Please return this page to the Gan Shalom office.)