

2021 Shoresh Preschool Guidelines and Safety Protocols

Our children's health and well-being are our top priority!

As we prepare for another year of preschool, please read these updated guidelines thoroughly. The intention of these guidelines is to help our families understand the steps we are taking to provide the safest possible place for your children to be outside your home.

Opening up our doors is an extremely challenging logistical project, but we are committed to supporting our community and doing our best to provide your children with the wonderful experiences that our quality preschool offers during normal times.

Children thrive when they are able to socialize and play with peers while parents and caretakers get the time they need to resume working, promote self-care, and find time for life's demands. It is with this in mind that we hope to ease some of your fears surrounding the idea of your children attending school.

Included in this packet are procedures that we follow, policies that are enforced, and a brief description of how the program runs, based on the information that is currently available. This is all **subject to change** based on final enrollment and modifications that may be required by the New Jersey Board of Health, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the New Jersey Department of Children and Family Services, the New Jersey Office of Licensing, and the Office of Governor Murphy.

The sole purpose of this ongoing process is to ensure the safety of all of the children in our care as well as all of our staff members. School looks different than ever before but there will be no shortage of learning, socializing and fun! **Take the time to read this important packet of information thoroughly.**

Why Attend Shoresh Preschool?

The benefits of socializing, exercising, playing, and learning are instrumental to children's development, especially at the preschool age. We aim to be a safe place for your children to be outside of their home while having the most fun with peers.

You can look forward to:

- 👏 A high-quality preschool learning experience
- 👏 Low Ratio of Children to Teachers: Maximum 10:2
- 👏 Outdoor Activities (weather permitting):
 - Tented lawn space and playground for various outdoor learning, enrichments, and play.
 - Bikes and scooters in our closed off parking lot.
 - Tented courtyard for lunch, snack, and arts and crafts.
- 👏 Indoor Activities:
 - Arts and Crafts
 - Manipulatives and Toys
 - Circle Time
 - Bathrooms
 - Naps

Our priority is to provide fun and exciting programming in the safest and most effective way possible.

All indoor and outdoor activities will follow all safety protocols as well as the regular state guidelines that are in place from the NJ Department of Children and Family Services Office of Licensing. When outdoors and weather permitting, we will have full use of our large covered playground, our expansive partially tented lawn for learning and gross motor play, our nature log circle, and our enclosed tented courtyard. We will add spaces as we feel they are needed and be as creative as we can to spend time safely outdoors.

What Are The Health and Safety Protocols At Shoresh?

The following guidelines are followed and prioritize the health and well-being of all. They have been created directly from the guidelines set forth by the New Jersey Board of Health, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the New Jersey Department of Children and Family Services, the New Jersey Office of Licensing, and the Office of Governor Murphy. We have also regularly been in contact with other area preschools who are re-opening to learn from their guidelines and practices.

While the state of NJ has not mandated it, **Shoresh will be requiring that masks or face shields be worn by all children whenever practical.** Our expectations are for children to wear their masks or face shields whenever they are indoors except while eating. If a child is having difficulty wearing a mask or they are upset in any way, they will not be forced to. All procedures are in compliance with all COVID-19 recommended preventative measures and practices:

-  If your child is showing any signs of illness and/or has a fever of 100.4 or more, you are required to keep them home until they are no longer showing symptoms and their fever is normal for 24 hours without any fever reducing medicine.
-  It is mandatory that all staff and children, except those under 2 years of age, wear masks or face shields. If your child refuses to wear a mask, send them to school with one every day anyway. We will work with your child to teach them the importance of wearing one and help you work on that at home.
-  Every staff member will be receiving training and orientation prior to the start of school about exactly how these protocols and safety measures will be performed and enforced.
-  All staff members will be assessed daily with temperatures taken.
-  All staff members will wear a mask or face shield and a smock at all times throughout the day. Gloves will be worn when necessary or appropriate, any time the teacher is interacting with a child's excrement.
-  Hand sanitizer dispensers will be available at several stations throughout the building and used throughout the day by teachers and staff.

- 👤 Teachers will have a “toys to be washed” bucket for all toys that children have touched. Recommended products will be used to clean all “small” items in the classroom that are being used (i.e. books, manipulatives, Lego action figures) in between uses by children.
- 👤 Table tops and chairs will be cleaned by teachers with warm soapy water followed by the required formula of bleach and water to disinfect, before and after they are used by the class.
- 👤 Children will be washing their hands frequently; upon arrival and throughout the day. It is recommended that everyone wash their hands for 20 seconds so we will be helping your children follow this guideline by singing songs that last 20 seconds.

The following upgrades have been implemented in the school:

- 👤 Newly installed HVAC units which will provide better and more efficient air circulation.
- 👤 Use of high-quality MERV 13 filters that are designed to trap viruses (more efficiently than traditional filters), will be used throughout the building in every HVAC unit.
- 👤 Portable sinks will be in most classrooms, for easy hand-washing.
- 👤 Cubbies will be located in classrooms to avoid cross-contamination.
- 👤 New high-quality air purifiers will be in every classroom.
- 👤 Windows will remain fully open in fair weather and partially open in inclement weather (whenever practical).

Teacher Procedures

Each teacher will be wearing masks or face shields throughout the day and will utilize gloves when cleaning surfaces, helping a child blow their nose, dealing with an injury, or any other time when gloves are appropriate. After the use of gloves, they will be discarded and teachers will thoroughly wash their hands before returning to work.

Outside Building Guests

In the event that contractors are required to enter the building for necessary maintenance or repairs, masks, hand sanitizer, distancing, and proper cleaning measures will be taken. When possible, work will be done while school is not in session.

In the event that there is any in-person programming offered by Temple Ner Tamid, they will remain at safe distances from any Shoresh activity spaces, and masks will be required while inside during school hours.

Regular State Inspections

Per our state license, we are required to provide basic levels of health and safety measures as outlined above. Shoresh will be subject to regular unannounced state inspections (about twice a month) to ensure we are following all the necessary guidelines on any given day. Regular adherence to our policies is a top priority for Shoresh.

How Will Morning Drop-Off Work?

All parents/caregivers will follow a traffic pattern through our parking lot to minimize traffic build-ups on Broad Street. For those dropping off using the carline, it is imperative that all your child(ren)'s belongings are easily accessible to the teacher who will be helping them out of the car.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, or you think they are showing any signs of illness, **KEEP THEM HOME**. Some of the common signs of COVID-19 are:

-  Cough
-  Fever
-  Shortness of Breath
-  Muscle/Body Aches
-  Unexplained Loss of Taste/Sense of Smell
-  Diarrhea
-  Headache
-  Fatigue

Breakfast Club

We are thrilled to be able to offer you this option for extended care in the morning beginning at 7:30am. For your convenience there is a "drop-in" option on an as needed basis in addition to registering for this service for the year.

Car Line Drop-Off Procedure*

- 👉 Drop-off time begins at 9:00am. Doors will remain locked until then and only accessible to Breakfast Club participants.
- 👉 All cars will pull into the parking lot on the right side of the driveway as normal. At the top of the driveway by the island, a custodian will be standing there directing the driver to enter through the traditional exit or to wait for exiting cars to your right.
- 👉 Drivers will then proceed through the lot, driving towards the back of the lot, then bearing right with the playground on their left side. Drivers will be required to stop near the entrance to the playground, all parties will stay in the car, and a staff member will do a temperature check and a visual medical assessment of each child.
- 👉 If your child has a fever of over 100.4, they are coughing, sneezing, exhibiting any signs of illness, **they will not be permitted to attend school** and the driver will be asked to take them home until a further evaluation is made.
- 👉 Once cleared, drivers will pull up to the front of the building entrance with the driver's side closest to the curb, and pull all the way up and **stop at the red stop sign**.
- 👉 Drivers must turn off the car's engine (this extra measure is to ensure safety).
- 👉 Drivers or passengers are NOT permitted to exit their car at any time during drop-off.
- 👉 One of your child(ren)'s teachers will be outside ready to greet your child(ren), unbuckle their car seat and take them into the building.
- 👉 Once the child is taken into the building, the driver will exit down the driveway on their right side as normal, watching for incoming cars and taking cues from the custodians. **No cars are allowed to pass other cars in the line, even if their child has exited their vehicle.** They must wait until the car in front of them has begun to exit the lot.

*A diagram is provided at the end of this document for your reference.

In-Building Drop-Off Procedure

-  Drivers will pull into the parking lot and use the first available parking space.
-  Parents/Caregivers **be required to wear a mask** upon entering and while inside the building. They will walk with their child into their classrooms which will be unlocked until 9:15am.
-  Classroom doors will remain closed until 9:00am. At that time your child will be welcomed into their classroom.
-  All entry/exit doors will be locked at 9:15am.
-  All parents/caregivers are instructed to arrive no earlier than 8:45am and spend **no more than 15 minutes** in the building as congregating in hallways is strongly discouraged due to continued COVID guidelines and precautions.

It is imperative that we be made aware if any of the following circumstances occur:

-  A child travels outside of the tri-state area.
 - *A COVID test will be required 3 days after your return and negative results made available upon request.*
-  A parent/caregiver/child has been tested for COVID-19 and is waiting for results.
 - *Your child(ren) will need to remain home until a result is received.*
-  A parent/caregiver/member of the household received a positive COVID test result and was not ever in the building.
 - *Your child(ren) will need to remain home for a minimum of 7 days. A negative COVID test should be submitted for both the child and the positive parent/caregiver/member of the household.*
-  A parent/caregiver received a positive COVID test result and has been inside the building for pick-up or drop-off.
 - *An email will be sent to the school informing them of the possible exposure and that other parents should be aware of any possible symptoms.*
 - *Your child(ren) will need to remain home for a minimum of 7 days. A negative COVID test should be submitted for both the child and the positive parent.*

-  A child received a positive COVID test result and has been in school in the last 48 hours.
- *The Department of Health in the State of NJ and the Bloomfield Department of Health will be notified, per the Office of Licensing and CDC requirements.*
 - *The child's class will be closed and all families will be expected to quarantine at home for 7-10 days from the onset of symptoms.*
 - *An evaluation will be made by the local health department as to whether or not the entire program or just that class will be required to be closed. This evaluation will include the severity of the symptoms of the infected person and the current status of confirmed cases in our region.*
 - *If a child is positive, a negative test result will be required after completing quarantine before the child may return to school.*

If at any time during the day, a child complains about any of these symptoms, they will be brought to our office. They will remain with a staff member until a parent or caregiver arrives to take them home. **Be sure to make arrangements for a parent or caregiver to be within 1 hour of the building at all times.**

What Will the Day Look Like for My Child(ren)?

At this time, we plan to use as much outdoor spaces as possible while the weather permits, in addition to utilizing our classrooms, for programming. Your child will be assigned to a class of no more than 12 children and 3 teacher pods. All classes will function as “pods” and they will not play with any other classes or children. Groups will be attending large gatherings, such as Music or Shabbat, in socially distanced pods in our social hall. Breakfast Club and Aftercare participants will be combined per licensing regulations. Our teachers will be vigilant in preventing children from spreading germs through too much touch or being too close to one another.

Arrivals/Bathrooms

All children will wash their hands immediately upon arrival. Upon entering the classroom, your child's backpack will be placed in their cubby and they will immediately wash their hands. All classes will either use the sinks in the bathroom in Room 1, the bathrooms upstairs and downstairs, or the portable sinks throughout the building. They will then be free to play throughout the room, until all children arrive. There will be mandatory class bathroom visits twice a day, before snack and before lunch. Individual bathroom needs will be met in Room 1 upstairs and one of the bathrooms downstairs.

Diaper Changing

Room one and the upstairs public bathrooms are equipped with a standard changing table. Two's classrooms have portable changing tables for their convenience. The provided pad covers are disposable and will be replaced after each use. Teachers will use gloves to change children and will use items provided by the family. In the event that there are no diapers or wipes provided or replaced, teachers will use items provided by the school. Dirty diapers will be disposed of properly, and each table and changing area will be disinfected by teachers after each use.

Snack and Lunch

All children will have snack and lunch outside (weather permitting). **We highly recommend that snack be provided by the family** in order to decrease the possibility of spreading germs. If a snack is not provided from home, we will provide one for your child (wheat crackers, pretzels, or similar items). Families will provide a lunch every day for their child(ren).

Lunches/snacks will be stored in the children's cubbies until lunchtime, so you will need to pack foods that can be kept at room temperature, or use an ice pack. Disposable lunches that include utensils, cups, bowls and plates are highly recommended. Staff will wear gloves when handling any food items and will not touch surface foods. Microwave reheating will not be offered. **Label all bags and food items** with your child(ren)'s first name(s) and last name(s) or initial(s).

Children Who Stay Until 3:00pm

-  2-year-old groups will rest in their classrooms on individually assigned cots.
-  3 and 4-year-old groups will enjoy a shorter rest time on individually assigned mats combined with an outdoor enrichment activity (weather permitting) and playground time. Dismissal will take place from the lobby in the same fashion as the 1:00pm dismissal (described below).

Licensing no longer requires that 4-year-olds have mandatory rest time. Your child's needs will be determined upon final enrollment. Indoor activities will be incorporated into an unexpected rainy-day schedule, or due to excessive heat/cold, and include all activities.

Aftercare

Aftercare will be offered and a “drop-in” option will be available. You will have the option of signing up for 1-5 days and given the option to switch the particular day your child needs additional care during the week.

Arrival/Dismissal Mask Requirement

All parents and caregivers are required to wear masks at drop-off and pick-up or whenever entering the building.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) If I give my child Tylenol at 6:00am and by 8:30am when we are getting ready to leave for school they seem fine, can I send them?

NO - keep your child home if they exhibit any sign of illness, necessitating the administering of Tylenol or any medication. Only children who have been fever free without the use of any fever reducing medicine for 24 hours will be permitted back into the building.

2) If I wash my child's hands before we leave our house for school, do their hands have to be washed again?

Yes, every child and staff member will be required to wash their hands immediately upon entering the building.

3) Can my child(ren) bring their favorite stuffed animal to school?

Yes, a plush item may be brought from home for your child(ren)'s individual use at rest time, stored with their rest mat/cot when not in use.

4) Will my child(ren) be socially distanced from their friends during activities and at lunchtime?

Children within the same group do not have to be 6 ft apart at lunch time or throughout the day. Teacher discretion will be used and children will be gently encouraged not to stand too close, hug, kiss, wrestle, or do anything that requires physical contact.

5) Will hand sanitizer be used on my child(ren)'s hands?

While hand sanitizer can be used on older children, it is not recommended for the ages of children attending Shoresh. They will be assisted in washing their hands with soap and water frequently.

6) Are all staff members fully vaccinated?

Yes, we are requiring that all staff get fully vaccinated at least 1 month before school begins.

7) If my child hugs or kisses another child will he be reprimanded?

NO! Teachers will closely follow children in the classrooms and physical contact/touching will be discouraged, but no, they will not be reprimanded.

8) If my 4-year-old refuses to wear a mask, will they be forced to?

It is strongly recommended that children over the age of 2 wear masks or a face shield and staff will gently encourage and explain the importance, but children will not be forced to, ostracized in anyway or be asked to leave the program. Parents will be asked to work in conjunction with teachers until the child is comfortable wearing their mask or face shield.

9) Will you provide masks or face shields or do I have to send my child(ren) in with their own?

Shoresh will have a supply of masks available if needed but it is recommended that you have several available for your child(ren), send them with their own masks or face shields, and wash/clean them daily.

Now, Let's Get Back to School!

We are really looking forward to a fun and exciting school year with your children. While this is a lot of information to digest, we hope to give your children the chance to enjoy being kids, interact with their peers, and enjoy school in the most safe and fun way possible!

Don't hesitate to contact us with any specific questions you may have and direct all inquiries to the Shoresh Preschool Director, Wendy Blum, wblum@nertamid.org or (973) 338-1500 X120.

Carline Drop-Off Procedure

