



**Neve Shalom
Nursery School
Parent Handbook
2018 - 2019**

Neve Shalom Nursery School
Educational Philosophy & Goals

At Neve Shalom Nursery School, our educational philosophy is simply that young children learn through play and active exploration with their environment. This means that children should be active participants in the classroom and should also be actively engaged in the learning process. Children should have the opportunity to make their own choices about learning several times throughout the day; this motivates children to learn. By the same token, the curriculum should focus on themes that are of interest to the children in the class.

Our child-centered program is based on the following principles:

- Children learn through active exploration of their environment.
- Children become motivated to learn when they are given choices about learning.
- Children learn through their interactions with the world around them and the people in it.
- Children's individual differences and needs are always respected and valued.
- Children succeed in school when parents and teachers work together as partners.

We have planned our nursery school program with the following goals in mind:

- Each child would be actively involved in the learning process by making his or her own choices about learning.
- Each child would be given many opportunities for social interaction and emotional growth through a positive approach to discipline that helped to develop self-control and self-regulation.
- Each child would be provided with open-ended materials that would allow him or her to express his or her creativity and individuality.
- Each child would be given opportunities to develop self-sufficiency and independence.
- Each child would feel respected and valued, safe and secure, and eager and ready to come to school wanting to learn each day.
- Each parent would become an integral part of the nursery school and one whose ideas and needs would shape our program and its goals.

Teacher-Child Interactions at Neve Shalom Nursery School

We, at Neve Shalom Nursery School, believe that the interactions between teacher and children are a critical part of what defines an early childhood program as high quality. Above all else, respect and love are the guiding forces behind our interactions with the children with whom we work and play.

When communicating with young children, we use our bodies to show that we respect and value them. We get down on the children's level; make eye contact, and physical contact. We use a positive tone and a quiet voice and make sure our interactions are personal. We acknowledge young children's feelings and validate them by repeating back what we have heard. We show interest in young children by asking open-ended questions, getting involved in their play, and making the time for conversations during routine times of the day, such as mealtimes. We understand the importance of using a sense of humor and recognize that often, humor is the best way to build rapport with a young child, in addition to being a good strategy for preventing a potential conflict from occurring.

When comforting young children, our interactions must be genuine, gentle, and personal. Physical contact, such as hugging or holding a child on our lap, helps to communicate our respect and understanding of the child's needs.

When directing young children, we use a polite tone, keep our directions short and simple, and make sure our expectations are clear. We always use warnings before a transition to a new activity so children know what to expect next. We model appropriate behavior so that children have an example to follow.

When guiding young children in appropriate behavior or correcting inappropriate behavior, we go to the child, use the child's name as we speak to him or her, and use a calm and quiet voice to express, in a positive way, the appropriate behaviors that are required. We use preventive measures whenever possible through observation, redirection, and the reinforcement of positive behaviors. When supervising young children in our toddler class, our teachers supervise the children by sight and sound at all times.

Most of all, we value and respect the fact that each child is an individual, and therefore, our interactions must be tailored to meet each child's needs.

Neve Shalom Nursery School Curriculum Guidelines

At Neve Shalom Nursery School, we believe that young children learn best through play and the active exploration of their environment. Our child-centered curriculum is based on the research-based model of developmentally appropriate practices put forth by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children); the curriculum focuses on hands-on, meaningful learning experiences and includes themes that are of interest to the children in each class. Jewish content is integrated into all learning areas.

As of 2013/2014 we have added aspects of the Project Approach to our curriculum, which promotes the investigation of a subject that is present in the real world of children. A topic for investigation must be something that the children can readily find in their “here and now” that will be initiated, explored, and in some form “documented” by the children as guided by their teachers. We have also included aspects of “Handwriting Without Tears” a handwriting readiness curriculum that is based on the developmental stages for drawing and writing readiness. It effectively teaches a correct writing utensil grip through singing and modeling as well as promotes capital and lowercase letter recognition through music and hands-on play. We utilize technology in the classroom by bringing in laptops and tablets to explore topics of interest and to display information both pictorially and with words. As of the 2018-2019 school year, all classrooms will have access to a Smart Board to enhance our ability to present information in an interactive and informative way.

All activities that we present here at Neve Shalom Nursery School shall include, but will not be limited to:

Art & Creative expression: painting, gluing, drawing, observation and appreciation, art experiences using a variety of materials, crayons, markers, scissors, clay, colors, playdough, stamps, mosaic, collage, process-oriented experiences, sensory experiences - finger-painting, shaving cream, sand, "gak", "oobleck", singing, dancing, making and playing instruments, creative movement, chants, fingerplays, clapping, listening.

Language/Literacy: reading, writing, being read to, labeling, rhyming, teacher-modeled writing, listening to taped stories, felt board, puppets, fingerplays, songs, sequencing, journals, dramatic play, formal and informal conversations, story retelling, story re-enactment, creating new stories.

Math: counting, patterns, shapes, sizes, categorizing, sorting, classifying, predicting, tallying, estimation, graphing, sequencing, ordering, construction with blocks and other materials, cooking, measuring.

Physical Development, Fine Motor: sensory experiences - goop, water, sand, "oobleck", “gak”, shaving cream, playdough, fingerplays, construction, pegs, lacing, buttoning, magnets, tweezers, clothespins, cutting with

scissors, stringing, self-help skills – zipping, buttoning, fastening, puzzles, art experiences using a variety of materials, writing.

Physical Development, Gross Motor: walking, throwing, kicking, jumping, running, marching, dance, movement, relay races and other organized physical games, tricycles, climbing, hopping, skipping, exercise and physical activity.

Science: exploration, experimentation, cause and effect, prediction, hypothesis, nature, mixing colors, texture, cooking, measuring, construction with blocks and other materials, sensory experiences - goop, water, sand, "oobleck", shaving cream.

Social Studies: families, friends, community, diversity, multiculturalism, community helpers, feelings/emotions, social skills, self-help skills.

Jewish Living: holidays, Shabbat, daily Jewish living, symbols, traditions, rituals, mitzvot (good deeds), brachot (blessings), tzedakah (charity), Israel.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Neve Shalom Nursery School provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, Neve Shalom Nursery School complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Neve Shalom Nursery School expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of Neve Shalom Nursery School's employees to perform their job duties may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

Neve Shalom Nursery School Parent Information

First Week of School

On the first day of school we offer the option of a “Meet the Teacher Day” for the 2-1/2 and 3 year old classes. If you and your child are ready for a full day, then we are too! Please feel free to drop off your child and return at your regularly scheduled pickup time. But if you would prefer a shorter first day of school experience to allow your child to acclimate to his/her surroundings, then we offer a one hour Open House (2-1/2 yr old class: 9:30 – 10:30 am and 3 yr old class: 10:30 – 11:30 am) as well. It is designed to give both parents and students an opportunity to meet their teachers and other classmates in the classroom setting. Whether your child is a first-time student, or a returning “veteran”, it is helpful to discuss the idea of nursery school in a positive and exciting way with your child prior to their first day of class. The 4 year old class and Kindergarten begins their normal schedule on the very first day of school.

On the second day of school, all classes for all grades will be held as normally scheduled. You may wish to send a picture of the family or a “lovey” item in with your child if you feel that separation may be especially difficult for him or her. After getting your child settled into the classroom on the first full day of school, separation may be difficult for both parent and child. We recommend that you reassure your child that you will be back soon, give a hug and kiss goodbye, and enlist the help of your child’s teacher to get your child involved in an activity that will make the separation period easier for him or her. Please know that our staff is very experienced in this area and we nurture your child through those first few days to enable them to feel safe and secure in the classroom environment.

Attendance

Children’s adjustment to school is aided by regular attendance, as is their ability to form relationships with both teachers and other children. If your child will not be attending school due to illness, family vacation, or other reasons, please notify the Nursery School Office at nurseryschool@neveshalom.net or (732-548-2238 ext 17) before 9:00 A.M. Notification of your child’s absence will allow the teachers to effectively plan for the school day.

Drop Off & Pick Up

Parents must obtain a swipe card to gain access to the building. The synagogue is locked during school hours for the children’s safety and parents can only gain entry to the building by the use of a swipe card. To obtain your swipe card, you must give a \$10 deposit to the office by the first day of school, which will be returned to you upon the return of your swipe card at the year’s end.

Upon entry into the building each morning, we ask that all parents assist their children in utilizing the hand sanitizer in the entryway prior to entering the classroom. As recommended by the CDC (Center for Disease Control), this has proven to be the best way to prevent the spread of germs from home to school.

Your cooperation is also requested in dropping off and picking up your child on time. It is important that all children arrive ready to learn and play by 9:00 A.M. If for some reason you will be later than 9:00 A.M., your cooperation is needed in notifying the school office. If you will be unavoidably delayed at the end of the school day, please call the school office so that we can inform your child's teacher. Our late stay policy will take effect if your child is not picked up in a timely fashion and you have not phoned the school office.

Release of Children Policy

Your child will be released only to you or those whom you have previously designated as alternate or emergency contacts on our Information of Release of Children form. Please inform the alternates that they will be asked to produce a picture ID upon picking up your child so that we can be sure that they are indeed the person you authorized. This is an important safety measure and we respectfully request your cooperation.

In the event that you are going to be later than your normal pick up time, you must call the office to notify the staff that you are experiencing a delay. If your delay is significant (longer than 20 minutes) and occurs during normal operating hours and you have phoned ahead, you will be charged the normal late stay rate of \$10.00 per hour for our extended day program. If the delay occurs after normal operating hours (after 6:00 pm, Monday thru Friday) or you have not phoned ahead during normal operating hours, you will be charged the rates of our emergency late stay service as follows:

\$1.00 per minute if the office is notified

\$2.00 per minute if the office is not notified

*This fee must be paid in cash at the time of pick-up, it is the salary for the person who is babysitting your child.

If you wish to avoid these charges, we suggest calling a friend or family member who is authorized to pick up your child, and then calling the office to notify the staff of the change in dismissal in the event that you are unable to make it to school on time.

If the designated pick-up person has not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and we have not been able to contact either parent, we begin calling the numbers on your emergency pick-up form. If we cannot reach either you or any of your emergency back-up options and have exhausted all other alternatives, we are mandated by the State of NJ to call the DYFS Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610).

In Case of Emergency:

The school must have a parent's activated and current telephone, cell phone, business numbers, and email address at all times. The parent(s) or authorized escort(s) are expected to be reachable and available to pick up

the child if the school deems it necessary. The school will take necessary action to ensure the safety, security and well being of the child in the event that the parent or authorized escort is not reachable or available. If your home, cell, or work number changes during the school year, it is your responsibility to please inform the nursery school office immediately.

Technology and Social Media Policy

The use of technology in the classroom (computers, tablets, cell phones) is at the classroom teacher's discretion and serves as a teaching tool and an enhancement to the daily lesson plan. In the preschool and Kindergarten classrooms, the use of technology can support "real time" learning in all areas of academic and social skills. However, technology should not replace the concrete, real-life experiences that are critical to a young child's learning.

As part of our duty to safeguard our children, it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all of our nursery school children, families and staff. This Social Media Policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. You Tube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter)

To maintain privacy and confidentiality, we require that no photographs taken within the nursery school setting or at our special events with the children are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child(ren). Parents and staff are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children. The only exception to this policy is the classroom private facebook pages set up and administered by the classroom teacher, in which case each parent will sign an agreement to not share or re-post photos to any other social media or facebook page. Parents also have the choice to opt out of participating in the classroom private facebook pages and their child's image will not be posted. Staff and parents should report any concerns or breaches of this policy immediately to the Nursery School Director.

Parking

Our parking lot is a busy place, especially during drop-off and pick-up times. Please exercise extreme caution in driving through our parking lot and in walking with your child to and from the building. Teach your

child the safety rules for walking to your car and please hold your child's hand through the parking areas. Please do not park at the door, even if it's "just a few minutes", please park in an available parking spot before entering the building. **Please do not leave children unattended in automobiles at any time, it is not safe and it is against the law.**

Tuition Payment Policy

Tuition is payable in full for the year, or for your convenience, in ten (10) equal monthly installments. You can submit ten (10) post dated checks or a signed credit card authorization form listing a pre-authorized credit card no later than August 17, 2018. Checks must be dated for the 1st of the month for which you are paying and credit cards will be charged at the same time each month as directed. For any child who enrolls after September, the tuition may be prorated. A one month non-refundable deposit, which was given upon registration, is automatically credited to the tenth and final payment.

Discipline and Child Management

The teaching staff of Neve Shalom takes a positive approach to discipline. Children will be recognized for the positive behaviors that they exhibit, instead of focusing only on the negatives. The nursery school program will focus on the strengths of each child as a unique individual and will recognize that each child has different needs and personalities.

One of our primary goals is to help the children to develop self-control and to learn alternate ways to solve conflicts. This goal will be achieved by the teachers modeling appropriate behaviors and providing conflict-resolving words that young children may not yet have. In the event that action is necessary, the child will be redirected to another activity or a different area of the classroom. Teachers will also use preventive measures to stop a potential conflict before it starts by intervening and providing assistance to those children involved. "Time-out" will not be used as a punishment or isolation period away from the other children, however a child may need a "cool down" period if he/she has been especially aggressive. This is not intended to be punitive; it provides a quiet outlet for the child to regain self-control.

Items from Home

Since it is difficult for young children to share items that are so near and dear to their hearts, **we ask that all toys, dolls, etc. be left at home**, unless otherwise instructed by the classroom teachers. Children may bring items from home on specifically designated Show and Share days. In addition, children may bring a lovey item, such as a blanket or stuffed animal, if there is difficulty with separation. We ask that all violent toys (swords,

weapons, action figures, etc.) be left at home at all times since we strive to create a safe and secure learning environment for all children.

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is a matter of individual development for each child and when the parent determines their child is ready, our teaching staff will support your toilet training efforts. Teaching staff will work closely with parents to insure that each child's needs in this area are met. Please be sure to discuss toilet teaching with your child's teacher. For children who are not toilet trained, diapers will be changed as necessary during the school day. Diapers and wipes must be provided by the parents.

When Your Child is Sick

When your child is out sick, please notify the school office. If your child has been sick and is ready to return to school, they must be temperature-free for 24 hours without Tylenol and exhibit no visible signs of illness. **Please keep your child home if they have a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, persistent cough, unknown rash, skin outbreaks, or discharge from the eyes and/or ears.** Please do not send your child to school if you think he/she is sick or has not completely recuperated from a recent illness. If your child is observed to be sick in school, you or your authorized escort will be called immediately to pick up your child. The school expects parental cooperation in this area in order to ensure the health and well being of your child as well as the other children and teaching staff.

Excludable Diseases

The diseases listed below are considered "excludable" by the N.J. Requirements for Child Care Centers. **Children with these diseases may not return to school without a doctor's note.** In the event that any excludable disease occurs at the school, parents of any child exposed to the disease will be notified in writing.

Respiratory:	Chicken Pox, Strep Throat, German Measles, Hemophilus Influenza, Measles, Meningococcus, Mumps, Tuberculosis, Whooping Cough
Gastro-Intestinal:	Giardia Lamblia, Hepatitis A, Salmonella, Shigella
Contact:	Impetigo, Lice, Scabies

The school reserves the right at anytime to exclude children to possible illness of any kind.

Medication Policy

General, minor first aid, (such as cleaning or bandaging minor scrapes), is carried out by the teaching staff. If a child gets injured, **regardless of how minor**, you will receive an incident form with a complete description of what happened and what steps were taken to treat the injury and comfort your child.

We do not administer prescription or over-the-counter medication at any time (please see sick policy under the heading **When Your Child is Sick**). However, we do administer emergency medication that has been provided to us by the parent with prior written authorization. All emergency medication authorizations must be kept on file in the Nursery School office. All emergency medications, such as an epipen, will be taped to the inside upper cabinet door in the appropriate classroom out of reach from everyone except for adults. The medication will be clearly labeled with the child's name and with instructions on how to implement. If special training is required in the administration of any medication (i.e. insulin), all staff shall receive that training to maximize our ability to serve your child.

Head Lice Policy

Just the mere mention of the words "head lice" makes most people shudder and start scratching their heads (it must be a psychosomatic reaction!) We have developed a Head Lice Policy for two reasons: to educate parents and staff regarding the proper treatment of head lice and to ensure that Neve Shalom does not become a source of transmission.

Goals:

- To identify infested individuals and see that they are properly treated
- Break the cycle of re-infestation
- To provide accurate and current information to parents and teaching staff regarding the appropriate detection, treatment, and management of head lice infestation.
- To educate all parents and teachers to be sensitive and understanding regarding this issue, an infestation of head lice is in no way indicative of lack of hygiene or cleanliness. It just means that your child came into close contact with someone who was already infested.

Policy:

- It is the policy of Neve Shalom Nursery School that if a case of head lice has been detected in a child, that student must be treated and "nit-free" before returning to school.
- All parents must inform Neve Shalom Nursery School if their child, a sibling, or anyone living in the home as been diagnosed with head lice.

- Neve Shalom Nursery School will inform all parents and teachers, maintaining strict confidentiality of the affected student, that there has been a case of head lice detected so that they can then check their children or have them checked professionally.
- There will be a designated, specially trained, nurse or Nursery School staff member who will be able to make the determination that a child is “nit-free” when they are ready to return to school after they have been treated. Upon returning to school after treatment, we ask that a parent or caregiver wait until the determination has been made before leaving their child for the school day.

Change of Clothes

Your child is required to have a complete change of clothing at all times. On the first day of school, students should bring a complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, and socks, underwear) to be kept in his or her backpack in case of emergency. If your child wears diapers, please also include several diapers and a small box of wipes in his or her backpack as well. Please be sure that each item is labeled with your child's name to minimize loss. We ask that you periodically update your child’s change of clothing to reflect the change in seasons and replace clothing used in school.

Inclement Weather

When either Metuchen and/or Edison public school systems are closed due to inclement weather, Neve Shalom Nursery School will also be closed. When there is a delayed public school opening in either Metuchen and/or Edison, we will also have a delayed and shortened day of nursery school. You will receive an email from the Nursery School Director, either the night before or very early that morning, with complete information regarding school closures or delayed openings.

In the event of conflicting announcements from the public schools, we will always follow the more cautious of the two. For example: if Edison Public Schools are delayed and Metuchen Public Schools are closed, we will be closed. If it is necessary to close school early, you will receive a phone call to this effect.

In the event of a delayed opening, all nursery school programs will begin at 10:00 am and will end at their regularly scheduled times.

Supplies

In order to facilitate classroom hygiene, each family is asked to provide one box of tissues and two boxes of wipes at the beginning of the school year.

Snack

A snack will be provided by the nursery school to students on a daily basis. The teachers sit with the children during snacktime to facilitate conversation and social development and to assist with self-serving. Our mealtimes are designed to enhance the children's social development and encourage their independence.

At snacktime, the nursery school children are given a choice of two snack items and juice (on Fridays) or water as selected from the following list:

Monday – Thursday: Cheerios, Veggie Straws, Pretzels, Nilla Wafers, Graham Crackers, Animal Crackers, or Fruit. Beverage: Water

Fridays: Challah, any item from the Mon – Thurs list
Beverage: Grape Juice or Water

Lunch

If your child is scheduled to stay for lunch, we ask that you respect the kosher rules of Congregation Neve Shalom and pack a kosher dairy lunch for your child. Here are just some of the many delicious options you can choose to pack for your child to give them a nutritious and yummy lunch!

Sandwiches: egg salad, tuna salad, cream cheese & jelly, peanut butter & jelly, American cheese (or any cheese of your choosing), bagel with cream cheese.

Other Options: yogurt, cheese and crackers, string cheese, cereal with milk, cottage cheese, hard boiled eggs, hummus, pita, fresh fruit (cut into small bite sized pieces), applesauce, fresh vegetables (cut into small bite sized pieces) and dip, any kind of pasta, salad, pudding, pretzels, chips, crackers, cookies.

Beverages: milk, juice, water.

Please do not include the following items: meat of any kind (not even kosher meat) or shellfish (shrimp, lobster, clams, mussels, crab, scallops).

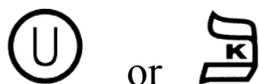
Kippot

To help your child become accustomed to the tradition of wearing a kippah (yarmulke) in the synagogue, each child is given the opportunity to decorate their own kippah at the beginning of the school year. This kippah is labeled with their name and can be worn only by them throughout the year. All children are asked to wear their own handmade kippah during snack time, Shabbat, and other religious celebrations. It is not mandatory.

Birthday Parties & Food

We encourage you to share your child's birthday with his/her classmates in an appropriate way. Please clear the date of the party with your child's teacher and the specifics of your plans with staff in advance of this special day. Please keep in mind that all food products brought into the building must be Kosher. This means that they must either be from a bakery approved by the synagogue or in a package bearing rabbinical certification. We are sorry but we cannot permit home-baked items under any circumstances. A few hints: all Entenmann's products are kosher, anything baked at the Costco bakery is now kosher as well.

When a packaged food item is kosher, it has a stamp or "hechsher" mark on the outside of the package. It generally looks like one of the following:



If you have any questions, or are unsure of what to bring in for your child's birthday celebration please feel free to ask any of our teaching or administrative staff for assistance. If there are any food allergies in the classroom we make sure that each child is accommodated by providing an alternative birthday "treat" to allow everyone to share in the festivities.

Our school has a beautiful custom, initiated by the parents themselves, to donate either a book, toy, or classroom item to the Nursery School in honor of a child's birthday. It is a wonderful way to honor your child's birthday and at the same time enrich our classroom learning environment. If you are interested in donating a book, toy, or other classroom item to our school in honor of your child's birthday, please speak with your child's teacher so that we can avoid duplication.

Individual Birthday Parties

Please keep in mind when planning your child's home birthday party that there are Neve Shalom families who keep Kosher and observe Shabbat and the other Jewish holidays. When possible, please schedule parties on other days than Shabbat and holidays.

1. Also, please try to consider all of the children in your child's class when planning a birthday celebration.
2. If you are planning a party that does not meet these specifications, kindly do not use classroom

or synagogue mailboxes for invitations.

Field Trips

When field trips (other than walks) are taken, specific permission slips will be sent home to parents. We appreciate your cooperation in returning them to the school as soon as possible. Parent drivers/chaperones will be requested. It is necessary that every child be placed in a car seat when in the car. Please note: In the event that a child is not sent on the field trip by the parent (and the parent does not wish to send the child with the class), the school does not provide separate childcare arrangements for that child.

Confidentiality Policy

Neve Shalom Nursery School maintains strict confidentiality regarding our students, families, and faculty. Requests by outside agencies, such as elementary schools, for information regarding individual children must be made in writing accompanied with the parent's written permission for release of that information. In addition, Neve Shalom Nursery School's children and families will not be discussed with any other families but their own.

Partners in Education

We invite parents to share their special skills and interests with our school when they are appropriate for nursery age children. Your child will be thrilled if you visit the classroom and spend ten minutes talking about your favorite hobby, sport, or what you do for a living. Please feel free to speak with your classroom teacher to schedule a mutually agreeable time for you to come in and speak to the class.

In addition, we encourage parents to discuss their concerns, recommendations regarding our school, fundraising ideas, and other issues important to parents of young children through regular ongoing communication and at monthly Nursery Committee meetings. We encourage and appreciate your participation!

Parent/Teacher Communication

Parent/Teacher conferences will take place in November and again in April and will be held during school hours. Parents who desire conferences at other times can schedule them with their child's classroom teacher as necessary.

Ongoing communication between parents and teachers is an important aspect of our school. As students cannot always be counted on to let you know what they do in class, teachers will facilitate this information in several ways, including writing about the class and its upcoming activities in the daily and weekly newsletters and speaking informally with parents at drop-off and pick-up times. Just as the teachers will inform you of your child's progress at school, parents are encouraged to communicate any new developments at home with their

child's teachers as well. For example, a move to a new home or a birth or death in the family can be stressful events for a young child. It may be helpful for the teachers to be aware of any changes in the child's home situation to better meet his or her individual needs. Changes in the child's routine at home may also affect his or her behavior at school, such as lack of sleep, transition to a new bed, potty training, or removal of the pacifier. Making your child's teacher aware of any of these new changes may help to make the transition easier for your child.

Incident Report

If a child gets hurt, or hurts another child, then we create an incident report to document the event. On the report there is a description of the incident, first aid administered (if necessary), and follow up. If there were two or more children involved then we do not disclose the names of the other children as per our confidentiality policy, but please know that each parent is given a report. Parents are contacted via telephone at the time of the incident if necessary, at the teacher's discretion.

Assessment Plan

At Neve Shalom Nursery School, in order to support children's learning and identify their individual needs and interests, we will conduct child assessments in the following manner. Each child will be observed and assessed in the areas of: Daily Routine, Independence/Self Help Skills, Social/Emotional Development, Cognitive/Language Development, Physical Development (including both gross and fine motor skills), Child's Personality Traits/Strengths, and most importantly, Goal Setting.

To achieve this we utilize the following tools:

- Creative Curriculum Assessment Tools
- Child Observation Records
- Parent Partnership – Communications and Information

The teacher is expected to discuss each child with their parents or caregivers adhering to our confidentiality policy, as stated in both the Employee and Parent Handbooks, and with the utmost sensitivity. All written reports are to be reviewed by the administration prior to the conference date, signed by both parent and teacher on the date of the conference, and kept in the child file locked cabinet guaranteeing complete confidentiality. Information will not be released to a third party unless we receive a signed waiver from the parent or caregiver.

Twice a year, and on an as needed basis, the results of these assessments will be shared with the parents at scheduled parent/teacher conferences. The results of these assessments are then utilized to individualize and inform the curriculum choices made by the classroom teacher in creating lesson plans throughout the year.

In the event that further evaluation is required beyond the scope of the classroom teacher, we provide information to families regarding developmental and health professionals, as well as local public school intervention programs. We handle each family with sensitivity and guide them through the evaluation process, attending outside meetings to assist in advocating for their child when necessary.

In addition to the two Parent/Teacher Conferences, informal meetings, discussions, notes, emails, and other communications take place all year long between teacher and parent, administrator and teacher, and administrator and parent. This triangle of communication is always open and available and considered a necessity in the support of each child in our school.

Emergency Preparedness Policy

All nursery school staff and administration are familiar with the school Emergency Preparedness Policy and it is reviewed at the beginning of each school year at Teacher Orientation.

Safety Precautions and Procedures:

- I. Do not, under any circumstances, open the front or back doors to let in any unidentified persons. Let the front office screen them and buzz them in.
- II. Do not leave the side doors to the playground propped open after you leave the playground. Those doors must remain locked at all times.
- III. When you are in the playground or taking a “nature walk” in the parking lot or playground area, at least one staff member must carry a working cell phone in case of emergency.
- IV. In the event of an emergency, maintain calm at all times.
- V. If you see an unfamiliar person or persons in the parking lot or playground area, or if there is an unidentified package or bag left unattended in the parking lot or playground area, contact the office immediately and bring your students inside to the classroom.
- VI. If there is an intruder in the building, immediately bring all students into the classroom and lock the door(s) behind you. Press your classroom emergency button (remember you need two fingers to activate the silent alarm) and remain in your classrooms until notified that the situation is clear.

- VII. In the event of an explosion, smoke, or strong odor, follow fire safety procedures as per monthly fire drills and evacuate the students to the opposite side of the parking lot. The Director or School Secretary will have contact information for all students and will ensure that each child is picked up by a parent or authorized person.
- VIII. In the event of an emergency requiring us to leave the area, evacuate to Centenary Early Learning Center, 100 Hillside Avenue, Metuchen NJ. Parents will be contacted at that time to pick up their child at this location.

Expulsion or Suspension Policy

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to ask a child to leave our program on either a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything within our power to work with the family of the child in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The NJ bureau of Licensing mandates the inclusion of this Expulsion policy in both our Parent and Teacher Handbooks. The following are reasons why we may have to terminate or suspend a child from Neve Shalom Nursery School:

Parent Actions for Child's Expulsion:

- Failure to pay tuition – *If there is a sudden financial hardship please meet with the Director and we will come to a mutually agreeable payment schedule. However, if there is no valid reason for non-payment, then this policy will be enforced.*
- Failure to complete forms including the child's immunization records – *We are mandated by our NJ Child Care License to have all required forms and medical records on file.*
- Physical or verbal abuse to the staff – *We encourage parents to discuss their concerns and to participate in the education process through ongoing, open communication between parents and staff. We hope that we never have to enforce this section of the policy.*

Child's Actions for Expulsion:

- Repeated physical and/or verbal aggression towards either staff or children – *We are responsible for the health and safety of all of our students and will monitor very closely any chronic pattern of aggressive or violent behavior. If after all means have been exhausted (please see Teacher-Child Interactions and Discipline and Child Management) and there is no change in this behavior pattern, the parents may be asked by the Director to keep the child at home temporarily while he/she is being evaluated by a professional or child study team. If the school and parents are unable to reach a mutually acceptable*

plan of action regarding the negative behavior pattern, then the expulsion may become permanent at the discretion of the Director.

Proactive Actions that will be Taken in Order to Prevent Expulsion:

- Teaching staff will make every attempt to redirect child from negative behavior.
- Teaching staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, and supervision.
- Teaching staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Teaching staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Parent or Guardian will be given written copies of disruptive behaviors in an incident report.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented by the Teacher, discussed with the Parent or Guardian, and maintained in confidentiality.
- Child will be given verbal warnings prior to consequences.
- Teaching staff will consistently apply logical consequences to inappropriate behavior.
- A "cool down" period will be offered to the child to regain self-control.
- The Director, Teacher, and Parent/Guardian will meet to discuss ways to promote positive behaviors both at home and in school.
- The Director, Teacher, and Parent/Guardian will meet to explore evaluation options either by a professional or child study team.

If after all of the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the behaviors leading to an expulsion. This may mean a short-term hiatus to seek professional input and create a plan of action to implement in the classroom environment, or a more permanent decision if it is deemed warranted by the Director. It is our strong desire to never have to enforce this policy; we will work with the family along with professionals or a child study team to formulate a plan that is consistent for the classroom environment as well as in the home.

By working together, we can form the partnership that is necessary to give your child the best education possible. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Neve Shalom Nursery School, please feel free to contact Martha Mack, Director at (732) 548-2238 ext. 17 or nurseryschool@neveshalom.net .