

Center for Early Education
Parent Handbook 2023-2024



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THE CENTER FOR EARLY EDUCATION



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OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education believes that children learn best through play. It is our goal to create a developmentally appropriate environment which fosters an appreciation for enrichment and discovery. It is our belief that nurturing the “whole” child through hands-on early learning experiences will create a lifelong love for learning. Inclusion, family connections, and a commitment to developmentally appropriate learning are fundamental aspects which enkindle our diverse Shirat Hayam Family.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Center for Early Education at Congregation Shirat Hayam does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families based on race, sexual preference, religion, cultural heritage, political belief, marital status, national origin, or disability.

LICENSING AGENCY

The CEE program is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, located at 360 Merrimack Street, Building #9, Lawrence, MA, 01843. They can be reached at 978-681-9684. The CEE upholds all the regulations set forth by the state for Early Education. A copy of the regulations is maintained in our office and can also be obtained on-line.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our center is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

[CEE 2023-2024 Calendar](#)

[Incident Weather Policy](#)

The CEE will make the determination to close or delay the opening of the center due to weather conditions based on the severity of a storm and/or State-of-Emergency. School closings and/or delays are made to assure the safety of our children and our staff. The Director will send a school-wide message via ProCare to all families to keep you informed of the decisions. Our school closure often aligns with the decision made by the Swampscott Public School System.

PROGRAMS

[INFANT PROGRAM](#)

Our infant program offers care for children from three (3) months to fourteen (14) months of age. We pride ourselves in offering the highest quality of care for our infants in a clean, calming, appropriately equipped classroom with experienced and knowledgeable staff. The infant ratio is seven infants to two teachers. We enrich our infant program with music, art activities, tummy time, and multiple walks throughout the day. Weather permitting; we take our infants out to walk the grounds or spend time in our Infant/Toddler outdoor classroom. This year in addition to using the [ASQ](#) for developmental screening we are also utilizing [Teaching Strategies Gold](#) for assessment and curriculum.

[Check out one of our Infant Spaces<3](#)

[TODDLER PROGRAM](#)

Our toddler program is for children from fifteen (15) months to thirty-three (33) months of age.

A toddler morning consists of exploratory play in the classroom, group time, open ended art activities, and gross motor activities. Snack brought from home is served mid-morning.

After lunch, all toddlers nap on mats with sheets and blankets brought from home. Rooms are darkened, quiet music is played, and all backs are rubbed. Afternoon snack, stories, movement, and gross motor activities fill the afternoon hours. This year in addition to using the [ASQ](#) for developmental screening we are also utilizing [Teaching Strategies Gold](#) for assessment and curriculum. [Peek inside Toddlerville!](#)

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Preschool children will engage in hands-on, educational activities and learning experiences throughout the day. The classrooms offer an open exploration of the classroom in addition to small group, large group, and individual learning experiences. Our child centered curriculum focuses on the essential components to support growth in the four domains: Social, Emotional, Physical, and Cognitive. Additionally, we incorporate learning materials that promote language and literacy throughout the classroom. In the open-ended art centers children create and explore a variety of materials that stimulate the mind and the senses as they design their unique works of art.

Children are divided into classroom cohorts of 10-18 children in Rooms 1, 3, library, and gross motor/Castle Room. We utilize all outdoor spaces for investigations and long-term project-based experiences. Throughout the day children participate in targeted activities to further their growth and development in specific areas. In addition to using the [ASQ](#) for developmental screening we are also utilizing [Teaching Strategies Gold](#) for assessment and curriculum. Through everyday observation and formative assessment, we acquire the information needed to scaffold and individualize the curriculum to meet the needs of each child.

Gross Motor Gains

Our outdoor playgrounds have continued to expand and provide an abundance of space for both toddlers and preschoolers alike to participate in gross motor play. We have 7 separate play spaces to accommodate multiple classrooms simultaneously. This allows for extended outdoor access each day.

We have two indoor gross motor rooms equipped to meet the needs of both toddlers and preschool age children. All classrooms have multiple opportunities each day to partake in gross motor activities. The gross motor rooms provide space for the children to exercise their muscles during the long winter months and provide a cool space for relaxing after a fun day in the summer sun.

Outdoor Classroom

At Shirat Hayam we strive to provide our children with exceptional learning experiences both indoors and out. Our outdoor classroom is a family funded natural learning space which provides our children with the opportunity to explore the world around them. Through generous donations and DIY materials our families have designed and implemented a spectacular learning environment. The focus of the outdoor classroom is to encourage exploration and discovery while utilizing the natural elements around us. This amazing space is dedicated in honor of Cheryl Schwartz. Cheryl has been an integral part of our learning community both as an educator and a former CEE Director. We are infinitely grateful for the loving care and support she has provided for the Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education. We thank Cheryl for the decades of learning experiences which have fostered a love for learning, and we appreciate her longstanding commitment to the field of Early Childhood Education.

Pick-up/Drop-Off FAQ

Where do I drop my child off and pick them up?

Toddler and Preschool drop off/pick up is in the rear of the building. Please drive around to the back parking lot and you will find fenced in playgrounds. Drop off and pick up will remain outdoors for Toddlers and Preschoolers (weather permitting). Should it rain, we will utilize the gross motor rooms. The doors are located to the left behind the preschool playground and to the right behind the toddler playground. **Please enter the gate and walk down the path to the gray door for toddler indoor pickup.**

Infant Drop off and pick up through 4:40 PM will remain in the chapel (double wooden doors in the front of the building) On occasion we will ask Infant families to drop off or pick up at the main synagogue entrance or in the rear of the building where toddlers are located. Please be sure to check your ProCare messages daily for current information!

We are a locked facility. Only parents and guardians with pick-up approval can collect children from the center. **If you would like to join us in the building, we are happy to accompany you and provide a tour!** You are welcome to schedule parent tours in advance or request a visit at pick-up time. The center for Early Education has an open-door policy, however for the safety of all we must account for each individual in the building.

Early Drop Off- Children who arrive for early drop off between 7:30-8:25 am are combined by program. The early drop-off location is dependent on the number of children signed up for early care. Specific instructions will be provided by Team Admin or the classroom teacher via ProCare or email regarding the pick-up and drop off location for your child.

Children join their specific classroom cohort by 8:30 am. and participate in their daily activities with that cohort for much of the day. As children are dismissed and numbers lessen, the cohorts combine and maintain ratios.

How can I learn about my child's day?

You will receive updates regarding our child via ProCare. Please be sure you downloaded the ProCare app! **ProCare is not updated in real time.** You will receive updated information as teachers are able to post. Our primary concern is for the care and wellbeing of the children. Please do not be concerned if the napping, feeding, and diapering is not logged according to the schedule you have provided. Our teachers care for the children first and update ProCare when they have a moment.

Please continue to reach out to the teachers via [Procure Messages](#) for absences or to share additional information about your child.

FAQ

What should my child bring to school?

Program wide- Please be sure to send a plethora of healthy snacks for your child. Anything that is unopened during the day will be returned.

Sheet and blanket- All rest linens will remain in your child's cubby when not in use. Rest linens will be sent home at the end of your child's school week.

Several changes of clothes- Your child will need to change if any bodily fluids happen upon their clothing.

Infant- Each day your infant will require several bottles (empty or already prepared), formula or breast milk, all food needed for the day (or two), bibs, 2 crib sheets, pacifiers, sleep sack, diapers, diaper cream, at least 2 extra outfits, outerwear appropriate for the weather. Refrigeration is available for all infant food and milk. **Safe sleep practices prohibit the use of blankets in cribs. We also cannot permit a binky with a stuffed animal attached at the CEE.**

Toddler- Each day your toddler will require snacks, lunch, bottles and sippy cup, diapers, extra clothes, a crib sheet (for the nap mats), and any loveys or blankets that they need for comfort at nap time.

Preschool- Rest sheet and blanket if your child naps- Extra clothes-

Will staff and children be required to wear masks?

Masks are not required at this time.

How will you monitor the health of the staff/children?

Educators who aren't feeling well are encouraged to remain at home. Children are monitored closely, and a parent is called if a child is not well. A child over the age of 2 will be given a rapid COVID test with parental permission. Please see illness policy for specifics.

Will children be moved to different classrooms to comply with ratios?

To the best of our ability, children will remain with the same group of peers every day. Teachers typically stay with their class and do not mix with other groups of children unless necessary.

Will classrooms be staffed with the same teachers every day?

Classrooms will be staffed with the same teachers every day to the best of our ability. If a teacher must call out, an in-house sub or floating teacher will be placed in that classroom to maintain ratios. If that is not possible, classroom cohorts will combine to maintain ratios.

What will happen if a staff member or child tests positive for Covid-19?

If a staff member or a child test positive for Covid-19 we will follow the protocols provided in our current COVID-19 policy.

What are the cleaning procedures?

We follow the Massachusetts Department of Early Education's requirements for health and safety guidelines for cleaning procedures. We use EPA approved [Force of Nature](#) cleaner to clean and disinfect surfaces while children are present. Only single use paper towels are used to wipe down surfaces before they are sprayed and left to air dry to be sanitized. If a toy has been mouthed, once the child is done using the toy the teacher takes the toy and places it in a dirty toy bin. The toys are cleaned and sanitized before returning into circulation. In addition to the teachers regularly cleaning the surfaces within the classroom, we also have a staff member cleaning all the high touch surfaces (doorknobs, sinks, toilets, etc.) in all the common areas daily. Every evening a professional cleaning crew thoroughly cleans and disinfects the CEE.

What are the hygiene procedures?

Upon entering the building, teachers and children wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately. Children and staff will wash their hands before and after meals, after using the bathroom, and between each activity. Preschool age children may use hand sanitizer with parent approval.

Can we pay to hold a spot for our child if we plan to send him/her in the future, but will not be sending him/her immediately?

If you choose to defer your enrollment, we require that 50% of your tuition is paid each month until your child's start date. This is non-refundable and non-negotiable as child tuition pays the salaries of our amazing educators.

ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTS

Parents are required to complete an online registration prior to the child's start at the center. Per EEC regulations, this paperwork is valid for one year only. Our center requires updated paperwork in January/August. In addition, a current physical and immunization form must be on file. **This must be completed online via ProCare, our online registration software.**

Included in this online packet:

- [Parent/Child contact information](#)
- [Developmental history and background information](#)
- Emergency contact information-ProCare
- [Individual health plan](#) (for allergy and/or medical conditions)
- Immunization and physical forms- ProCare Document Section
- [Permission form](#) as needed for prescription and over the counter medication
- Fee schedule and consent

Re-enrollment Documents

Once enrolled at the CEE you must update your child's [permission forms](#), parent portal information, and developmental history each year. Families are also required to maintain current immunization and physical forms in ProCare. When your child(ren) visit the doctor for their yearly physical please upload the physical and immunization form to ProCare in the document section. If your child has an IHCP or requires medication, we will need updated forms each year. Team Admin will reach out to you in advance of your form expiration date to ensure our records remain current.

FOOD

Breakfast

May be brought from home. We will provide a sanitary place for children to eat breakfast between 7:30-8:30 each day.

Snacks

Please provide a water bottle, labeled with his/her name, and a morning/afternoon snack each day.

Healthy Lunches

Please send your child's lunch in a labeled insulated lunchbox, with an icepack. Reusable containers are allowed however we ask that you **please refrain from sending in glass containers** of any kind. **We request all food to be NUT FREE. Kindly do not send in any peanut butter or nut product of any type. Any food allergies must be reported to the staff and clearly written on your child's forms with documented medication consent and IHCP.** Water bottles are refilled with filtered water, and used all day long, including lunch and all snack times.

Because we are in a conservative synagogue, we ask that you **refrain from sending** in any **pork** or **shellfish** products. Some snack and lunch suggestions:

- ✓ Pretzels
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Mini bagels
- ✓ Graham crackers
- ✓ Rice cakes
- ✓ Mini muffins
- ✓ Fruits of all kinds (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- ✓ Vegetables of all kinds
- ✓ Cheese sticks or cubes
- ✓ Tuna fish
- ✓ Boiled eggs
- ✓ Chicken/Turkey
- ✓ Beef
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Yogurt
- ✓ Egg salad
- ✓ Soups
- ✓ Macaroni and cheese
- ✓ Cottage cheese
- ✓ Pizza
- ✓ Salads
- ✓ Quiche
- ✓ Soy nuggets
- ✓ Hummus
- ✓ Spinach patties

We love to celebrate birthdays! When sending in classroom birthday treats, please provide individually packaged popsicles. **A consult with the classroom teacher prior to sending any food items for the class is required to consider allergy restrictions.**

INFANT-TODDLER POLICIES

In accordance with the EEC regulations, and to protect the health and welfare of the children, **every infant 15 months and younger in our care, must be placed on his/her back for sleeping.** In addition, **no child shall be napped in a crib, bassinet, port-a-crib, or playpen containing pillows, comforters, blankets, stuffed animals, binky with a stuffy attached or beaded attachment, or other soft-padded materials. Due to licensing restrictions, we are not able to swaddle our infants. Please send in a sleep sack for naps.**

Daily Infant Supplies Needed: Several bottles, formula or breast milk, all food that is needed for the day (or two), bibs, 2 crib sheets, pacifiers, sleep sack, diapers, diaper cream, at least 2 extra outfits, outerwear appropriate for the weather. Refrigeration is available for all infant food and milk.

All families who have children in diapers are required to pay a wipe fee of \$11.00 per month.

We will follow your child's schedule (naps, feeding) to the best of our ability.

Daily Toddler Supplies Needed: Toddlers need snacks, lunches in an insulated lunch box bottle/and sippy cup, diapers, extra clothes, a crib sheet (for the nap mats), and any loveys or blankets that they need for comfort at nap time.

ALL personal items must be labeled including food containers/breast milk.

Diapering for infants and toddlers

Infants and toddlers have diaper checks every two hours or more often if needed. Children will not remain in soiled or wet diapers. The following guidelines are utilized during diapering:

- Staff member washes hands before and after diaper changes
- Child washes hands after diaper change
- Staff member wears vinyl, latex free gloves that are changed between each child.
- Changing mat is covered with protective paper and is wiped with disinfectant after each use.
- Soiled diapers, along with gloves and protective paper are placed in a plastic lined, covered container specifically for diapers.

All infant and toddler families will be provided with information at the end of each day. This information includes, but is not limited to, information regarding diaper changes, naps and foods eaten. The information may be received electronically app/email or in paper form.

PRESCHOOL POLICIES

Toys from home

We ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in the car. **Loveys needed for comfort or transitions are always welcome!**

Backpacks

We ask that each child have a backpack or tote bag large enough for lunch boxes, artwork, soiled clothes, water bottles, notices, etc. **Please do not leave any sunblock, diaper creams, or medications in your child's backpack or cubby. All medications and creams must be handed directly to a teacher to be placed out of reach.**

Outdoor Time

Students at the CEE play outdoors daily. We ask that all children come in rubber-soled shoes (sneakers are best) and to always have appropriate outerwear in their cubbies. When the weather is inclement, Team Admin will make the final decision on outdoor play by using the [Child Care Weather Watch](#). Please send in appropriate attire daily or leave weather gear in school so your child can participate in all activities.

Naps and Rest-time

All infants nap as per their individual schedule in individual cribs. All toddlers nap after lunch on rest mats for approximately 2 hours. Preschoolers are given a rest period, and they often will take a short nap. No child will be forced to sleep or be expected to rest for an inappropriate amount of time. Children who are awake during rest time will have quiet activities to choose from.

Communication

Please use the ProCare app to communicate with your child's teacher. Parents are welcome to schedule a Zoom call with Team Admin or the CEE Educators at any time. Please email andrea@shirathayam.org to request a meeting.

Transitioning infants and toddlers

All children are placed in developmentally/age-appropriate classroom groupings. The CEE staff goes through a very thoughtful process for each child's placement. Some of the factors that go into forming transition groups are chronological and developmental ages, recommendations from current staff, and friendships. We care about each child and work to establish successful transitions for all.

Infant transitions occur when they reach 10-15 months of age, and toddlers, when and **ONLY IF** they need to move to an older group. Parents will be notified prior to a transition, and we will maintain continuous communication with families to insure a smooth transition between classrooms. Transitioning will be done on a gradual basis. The children will spend time in their new classroom for a short time each day, and they will be accompanied by one of their current teachers for comfort as they adjust. When your child is approaching their transition time, we will provide you with detailed information about the transition process.

Healthcare Policy

Flu shots and COVID-19 Vaccinations are highly recommended for all children over 6 months of age who are enrolled in childcare

COVID-19

Upon arrival each child must undergo a visual health check. Please do not send your child to the CEE if they are not well. We will send children home if they present with the symptoms listed in the health care policy.

Illness

The CEE has four concerns regarding an ill child: the health of that child, the health of the children in the group, the health of the teachers and the parents' needs.

There are illnesses for which children need to be excluded from the program due to the health risk they pose for other children and staff. **IF** the child has had a diagnosed contagious illness (that is treatable such as strep throat), he/she may return to childcare after 24 hours on an antibiotic if they are symptom free. If an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities or creates a greater need for care than the teachers can provide, we will contact you to take them home to rest.

A child will be excluded from coming to the center when any of the following symptoms/infectious diseases present:

- **Extreme fatigue, headache, runny nose, congestion, or any other sign of illness (Combined with one or more of the symptoms below)**
- Feverish/chills
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Nausea
- Loss of taste of smell
- Muscle aches
- **Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher**
- Conjunctivitis (discharge, redness, watery eyes)
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
- **COVID-19 symptoms, positive/presumptive positive test results** Please see our COVID-19 Policy for additional information.
- Flu like symptoms
- Positive flu test (Mandatory 3-5 days at home even if symptom free)
- **Head lice/nits**
- Undiagnosed Skin rash
- Pinworms

In accordance with Massachusetts EEC licensing, if a child has any of the above symptoms or is sent home after becoming ill at the center, they must remain home for AT LEAST 24 HOURS OR LONGER until they are symptom free and fever free without the aid of a fever reducer such as Tylenol or Motrin. We ask all families to respect the health of the children and educators in our center by adhering to this policy.

Medication Policy

All medication must be brought into the program in the original container/box, clearly stating the physician's name, the child's name, a current date, the dosage, and the precise directions for its administration. A [parental consent form](#) must be signed by the parent or person responsible for the child that day. **Non-prescription medicine, such as Tylenol, Benadryl, etc. must have a note from your physician.**

We are not allowed to administer any medication, prescription or otherwise, for more than two weeks, unless it is accompanied by a supplemental note from the child's physician. **We require the first dose of any medication to be given at home.**

The person designated as responsible for the child must fill out an authorization form and along with the medication give it to the child's teacher. At the end of each day, it is the responsibility of the designated caregiver for the child to claim the medication. **Medicine will not be placed in a child's backpack, lunch bag or basket.**

Medication at our center must be stored in their original containers (box included please) and labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug and the directions for its administration and storage. All medications, including epi-pens and inhalers are secured out of reach of children and under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, and security in the classroom backpacks. All expired medicine will be returned to parents to be disposed of properly.

*****If your child has a health condition or an allergy which requires us to keep medication on the premises, [additional paperwork](#) is required. Please provide the following documents to your healthcare provider for completion. The forms require a parent signature.**

[IHCP Medication Consent](#)

TUITION

2023-2024 Tuition Rates

Our operating budget is based on tuition. For us to pay our bills and salaries, it is essential that we are strict about keeping up with monthly payments. If problems occur that make it difficult to keep this schedule, arrangements should be made with the Director. Monthly tuition is based on pre-registered contracted fees. Refunds/credits are **NOT** given for: days when the program must remain closed due to a pandemic, weather, natural disasters, or emergencies, (or must close early to ensure the safety of the staff and children). Additionally, we do not offer refunds or prorate tuition when the program is closed to celebrate a holiday when your child would normally be scheduled to attend that day; or when your child will be absent from the program due to illness or family vacation.

We request that you notify the center office any day that your child does not/cannot attend the program due to illness or vacation. We may contact you out of concern should we not hear from you. **The center requires 30 days' notice for a change in your child's schedule. We allow one complementary schedule change per year. Additional schedule changes will incur a \$75 schedule change fee.**

The CEE program is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Families are expected to pick up their child by the designated time stated on their specific contract to maintain compliance with EEC licensing and to respect the schedules of our staff and the welfare of the children placed in our care. If a parent or person responsible for picking up a child arrives after their designated time, the staff member in charge of staying with your child will verify and document the time of your arrival. **You will be charged the extra hour's rate which will be posted to your bill. Those parents arriving after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$1.00/minute for the first 15 minutes, and then \$2.00/minute after 6:15 p.m.**

No refunds or credits will be given for withdrawal from the program unless it is for medical reasons that are verified by a physician's certificate, or if a family needs to relocate out of state. We require 30 days' notice to withdraw from our program. If you do not provide 30 days' notice you are responsible for the monthly payment that has been billed to your ledger.

Add-on Days

We do our best to accommodate our children and families in need of care. Children can attend the CEE on days they are not scheduled, as space is available. Effective 4/1/22 the add on day pricing per child, per day, for all programs will be:

\$75- 8:30-12:30 PM

\$150 – 8:30-3:30 PM

\$175- 8:30-4:30 PM

\$200- 8:30-6:00 PM

Additional Early Drop off requests are \$15/per child- per day

After school hourly rate \$15/hr.

CURRICULUM

Our experienced, certified educators use a variety of resources to develop programs for our children, including the Massachusetts guidelines for Common Core Curriculum and the QRIS standards distributed by the Department of Early Education and Care. Teachers work in teams (Infants, toddlers, preschool) to prepare curriculum. Our curriculum is inspired by the [Reggio Emilia Approach](#). Our Educators are supported by colleagues here and at other early childhood centers, the CEE director, teacher-training workshops, and conferences. We offer environments that are caring and encourage social interaction. Children are introduced to

language arts, science, math, social studies, music, and creative movement. Specialists for Hebrew, Spanish, Yoga, Mindfulness and Music were regular additions to our program during pre-COVID times. It is our goal to reinstate and maintain a full enrichment program as soon as possible. We currently offer Music for all age groups and Mindfulness and Yoga for our oldest preschool groups.

At 12:30 p.m. a rest period is offered. Quiet music is played, the rooms are darkened, and children have quiet activities to use at tables or on their mats. After rest time, snack is served, and developmentally appropriate activities are available. Outdoor time or gross motor room activities are a favorite part of the afternoon.

When ratios permit at 5:00p.m. all toddlers and preschool-age children combine into separate program spaces within the PLC classroom.

COMMUNICATION

The CEE is fortunate to have the ProCare to communicate with parents. Pictures and notes are sent home on a regular basis to keep parents up to date on classroom happenings. Important information from the Team Admin is posted in this app. We also may provide information via email or in hard copy. CEE Snippets, our newsletter is sent out via email through the Procare software.

Infant and toddler families will receive daily updates which provide a glimpse into their child's day. Once children are of preschool age, we do not record food intake. All uneaten items are sent home. We invite you to look at the pictures and posts and ask your child open-ended questions about their day. We are happy to provide you with examples of what to ask your child.

What was your favorite part of the day? What made you laugh today? Tell me about the story you heard in school! Who did you play with today? How were you a good friend today? What made you smile today? What did you notice outside at school? I see that you..... tell me about it!

***All educators can be reached via Procare message. Please note that your messages are not private and are visible to all staff members.**

ASSESSMENTS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Progress reports for toddlers and preschool age children are conducted twice a year, in January and June. This is a written report, of which one copy is sent to the parents and one copy placed in the child's school file in the Director's office. We require a signature to acknowledge that you received a progress report for your child. **You can request/schedule a meeting with your child's teacher any time during the school year.** Written reports are done every 3 months for

those children under 15 months of age. All reports are kept confidential and are in the child's file in the Director's office.

If, at any time, you have special concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher- - send a note, speak with her briefly at drop-off or pick-up to arrange a time, or leave a message at the CEE office. If you have a message for a teacher during school hours, please call or email the office. **Teachers cannot use their cell phones for calls or texting during school hours.**

Parents and teachers are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have about their child. Parents will be provided with a written report summarizing any observations related to the concern and will be briefed on staff efforts that have been made to accommodate the child's needs. If it is determined at the parent/staff meeting that among the group we do not have the resources to provide the child with the services he may need, parents and staff shall work together to secure services from available community resources.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Our professional teachers use positive techniques of guidance, redirection, and proactive elimination of potential issues rather than competition, comparison, or criticism. Consistent, clear rules are developed in conjunction with the children and are discussed on a regular basis to help the children understand what is expected. Intentional praise for positive choices is encouraged center wide.

Guidance techniques are non-punitive and are accompanied by rational explanations of expectations. Limits are set for children, but the environment is arranged so that a minimal number of "no's" are necessary.

Sometimes, despite educator interventions, a pattern of behavior is noted which threatens the emotional or physical safety of a child or his classmates. In that case, staff will address the concern with parents and create a proactive plan to help the child. This may consist of a reduction of hours or alternative room placement. If the behavior concern continues after implementation of the plan, a child may be asked to leave the program for a short period of time (1-5 days). If the problem is not resolved, the child may be removed from the program. It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive experience for their child. However, we do realize that there may be circumstances that keep a child from being capable of fully participating in a certain group and recognize that the program may not be equipped to deal with all circumstances underlying certain behavioral issues. If needed, we will assist parents in pursuing referrals to outside supportive services such as Early Intervention, a town's public-school services, or counseling services, as well as the child's pediatrician.

IF, despite every effort of accommodation and individualization for the child, concerns for the safety or education of that child or others in the program continue, the parents and/or the center director may conclude that the CEE program is not an appropriate setting for the child. In that situation, staff will help the parents find an appropriate placement.

The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education shall prohibit spanking or other corporal punishment of children; verbal or physical abuse; neglect or abusive treatment, depriving children of meals or snacks; force feeding children; forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing; disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in our care. All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse and shall report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of children and Families.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All staff members have undergone Massachusetts Background Record checks, statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification, and are all certified by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. All staff has taken the required [Strong Start](#) trainings. All staff members are current in CPR and First Aid.

Babysitting

Often our teachers are asked to babysit outside of the CEE in the child's home. This is done on a private basis, and the CEE assumes no responsibility for this. Babysitting must not interfere with the educator's work schedule at the CEE.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Center for Early Education encourages parents to become involved in school happenings! Teachers regularly include parents in special celebrations and welcome parents and extended family to share special talents with the children. Parents are welcome at any time to read a story, assist as classroom helpers, or just spend some time in the classroom. **If you are interested in volunteering your time at the CEE please let us know!**

Parents are invited to join our Va'ad Horim, the CEE parent committee. We welcome your input-on CEE events, family programming, enrichment development and fundraising.

Please reach out to andrea@shirathayam.org for details!

SPUR Community Roots Garden at The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education

We are so excited to be partnering with [SPUR](#) to provide organic produce to those facing food insecurity in our community. Thanks to the helpful hands of our students and teachers we have been planting, weeding, and harvesting throughout the summer. Each Wednesday, during harvest season, we need a parent volunteer to sign up and deliver this produce to the Anchor Pantry in Swampscott. To learn more and to sign up, please [click here](#)!

If you would like to assist in the planning and implementation of the SPUR Community Roots Garden at The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education please email andrea@shirathayam.org !

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLAN

Fire/Emergency Evacuation Plans are posted in each classroom and throughout the building. Fire drills are done monthly.

If the synagogue needs to evacuate for any reason, and the children cannot stay on the premises, the children, with police escort, will be walked to a safe point away from the building. At that point, all parents will be notified by text message and/or phone call from a CEE staff member as to where to pick up the children.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION UP TO DATE VIA THE PROCARE PARENT PORTAL THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR. Staff will always remain with the children.

Complete emergency contingency plans are available in the CEE office.



Congregation Shirat Hayam
Center for Early Education
55 Atlantic Ave. Swampscott, MA 01907
(781)598-3311

Vaccination Policy and Waiver

At this time, the vast majority of our CEE employees have been vaccinated; While we encourage all our employees to be vaccinated, we are not requiring our current and future staff to be vaccinated. We are maintaining the suggested Massachusetts Early Education Commission and the CDC health and safety protocols that have served us well throughout this time, including limiting outside visitors to the CEE wing, masking for all unvaccinated individuals (children and staff), hand sanitizer upon entry, frequent handwashing throughout the day, and increased outdoor activities. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to andrea@shirathayam.org

WAIVER

I/we _____ are aware the Center for Early Education (CEE) has staff who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19. I/we acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19. I acknowledge that the CEE and Congregation Shirat Hayam have put in place preventive measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to the best of their abilities.

I/we further acknowledge that CEE and Congregation Shirat Hayam cannot guarantee that my child will not become infected with COVID-19. I/we understand that the risk of my child becoming exposed to and/or infected by the COVID-19 virus may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, but not limited to CEE and Congregation Shirat Hayam staff and families.

I/we agree to hold Congregation Shirat Hayam and the Center for Early Education harmless if my CEE child/children contract COVID-19 as a result of transmission through the CEE.

The Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education COVID-19 Policy

If individual is Symptomatic while in our care

- We will ask if you would like your child to be tested for COVID-19

If an Individual Tests Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)

- Individual will stay home for 5 days, returning on day 6 if they test negative and wear a mask through day 10

If the individual cannot mask, they cannot return until they have a negative test or reach day 10

If an Individual Was Exposed to Someone with COVID-

- Test if symptomatic, if test is positive, follow isolation guidance above

Please note this policy is subject to change at any time.

If you are unable to locate a COVID-19 test to return for care, please reach out to andrea@shirathayam.org and we will assist you in locating a test.

CEE Mask Policy Update

Effective March 7, 2022, the CEE will transition to a Mask- Optional policy for adults and children.

We will continue with our current COVID-19 mitigation practices which include:

- Consistent cleaning and sanitation procedures
- Frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer
- Daily health checks
- Rapid test as needed

The health and wellbeing of our Shirat Hayam Family is of utmost importance. When developing our policy, we take many factors into consideration including EEC licensing mandates, Board of Health requirements, Swampscott Public School protocols, and CEE specific conditions. Developing policies that meet the needs of our Shirat Hayam families and educators is not a task that we take lightly. Our goal is to provide a happy, healthy, hands-on place where your children will thrive.

Please note this policy is subject to change at any time.