



Jewish  
Community  
Preschool



# JCP Handbook

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## **History of the Jewish Community Preschool**

The Jewish Community Preschool was established by the congregation of Beth Israel Synagogue and Temple Emanuel in 2005 to offer a comprehensive preschool experience while promoting an understanding and love of Judaism. Our focus is the personal development and growth of each child as well as building a positive self-image. We strive for each student to feel good about who they are and be excited about who they can become. Children are allowed to explore a wide variety of activities and materials available to them. Each child is given many opportunities to learn, share, respect the feelings of others, and get along in a group of peers. We are positive that your children will thrive in the loving environment created within our congregations.

## **Preschool Philosophy**

The mission of our preschool is to help families nurture and educate their children in a Jewish environment. We welcome children of inter-faith families who are comfortable with the program's Jewish focus. The preschool is child-centered with hands-on approaches to learning. Children are given opportunities to develop physically, socially, cognitively, and spiritually.

Teachers serve as guides, helping children make their own discoveries. Children are encouraged to perform tasks independently.

## **Visitation Policy**

The Jewish Community Preschool has an open door policy in regards to visits by parents and family members during the school day; drop-in visits are welcome. For the safety of our students and staff, all visitors must check-in with the director upon arrival.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

We encourage parental involvement within our program. If you have a special talent (music, art, dance, science, storytelling, etc.) that you would like to share, please let us know!



## Hours of Operation

|                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| JCP Half Day       | Monday – Friday 8:45 AM – 1:00 PM |
| JCP Full Day       | Monday – Friday 8:45 AM – 5:00 PM |
| Before-school Care | Monday – Friday 7:45 – 8:45 AM    |
| After-school Care  | Monday – Friday 5:00 – 5:30 PM    |

NOTE: Because we are a smaller, growing program, we can sometimes adapt to serve the needs of your family's schedule with some flexibility. Please talk with us about your needs.

**Preschool Drop-off is from 8:45 – 9:15 AM** with our Welcome Time beginning promptly at 9:15 AM. JCP Welcome Time is an important time to bond and start the day on the best note with all their friends!

NOTE: Please contact the director if your child will arrive late or be absent.

**Half Day Pick-up is from 12:45 – 1:00 PM.**

**Full Day Pick-up ends at 5:00 PM and After-school Care Pick-Up ends at 5:30 PM.**

**Pick-up People** - If someone other than you will be picking up your child, we need to know for your child's safety. You may introduce this person to JCP staff in person or notify us via a note or phone call prior to pick-up time. Please remind the person to bring a photo ID as it will be required and checked in order to pick up your child.

**Late Pick-up** - Cellular time is the "official clock" If you have an emergency and are going to be late contact the director *immediately*. Late fees will be charged. **LATE FEES** are \$5 for the first 5 minutes late and \$1 per each additional minute. For example, 1-5 minutes late is \$5; 6 minutes late is \$6; 7 minutes late is \$7, and so on.



## **Inclement Weather Policy**

JCP *generally* follows the Roanoke City Public Schools (RCPS) closing and delay schedule.

- If RCPS are closed, JCP is closed.
- If RCPS are on a 1-hour delay, JCP will begin school @ 10:00 AM with Before-school Care beginning at 9:00 AM.
- If RCPS are on a 2-hour delay, JCP will ALSO begin school @ 10:00 AM with Before-school Care beginning at 9:00 AM.

Please watch the local News stations for RCPS decisions and our JCP Facebook page for confirmation. If you have ANY questions, do not hesitate to contact the director for clarification.

## **Emergency Closings**

JCP is committed to providing the safest possible environment for your children. In the event of a weather-related or any other type of emergency, the director will *directly* contact all parents to notify them of what actions are being taken. Also, an announcement will be made on the Facebook page.



## **Curriculum Information**

We serve children ages 1-5 and provide the following guidelines for curriculum:

- Kindergarten readiness
- Basic concepts (shapes, colors, numbers)
- Jewish concepts, such as holidays, Torah, values, and cultural identity
- Shabbat activities each Friday
- And many other exciting adventures!

Teachers prepare an age-appropriate environment, always being responsive to the developmental needs of the individual child. Because young children love experimenting, they are allowed to do things themselves, to learn and gain mastery in our classrooms. We encourage this type of growth process by providing a long work/play period daily. There are daily snacks, circle time, center time and gross motor time to exercise growing bodies.

Our curriculum includes a full program of emergent math and early literacy activities that are consistent with the most current philosophy of early childhood education. We also emphasize science, music and movement, art and age-appropriate social skills to allow them to experience the excitement of learning and of the world around them.

The study of Judaism is an integral part of our program. Our curriculum includes specific activities and celebrations for Shabbat and other Jewish holidays.

The children are exposed to music rich in Jewish values, morals, and prayers throughout the school day. In addition, they are also given many special musical opportunities.

## **Discipline Policy**

At JCP, our children's safety comes first. Children need limits, and discipline is approached in a warm, positive manner where rules and routines are clearly established. Expectations are age-appropriate, and positive reinforcement is stressed. Gentle reminders, redirecting a child, providing choices, and offering a safe area often helps a child solve problems and reduce conflict with others. The ultimate goal is to teach children safe, appropriate behavior, self-regulation and safe, successful ways to work through problems.



## **What is Shabbat?**

Shabbat is our very special holiday which we celebrate each week on Friday. Shabbat is the celebration of the creation and Shabbat begins Friday night and continues until after sundown Saturday night. We celebrate Shabbat in the preschool by joining in songs and stories. We also share the prayers over Challah, a special bread prepared for Shabbat. This is a very special time for the children, and we welcome you to join us.

For more information about celebrating Shabbat with your family, please see the Rabbi.

## **What is Tzedakah?**

Tzedakah is the Jewish idea of giving. This usually means giving to a larger purpose or goal, such as collecting coats to give to those without any during the winter months. Our preschool also contributes to these efforts by bringing Tzedakah on Fridays. Each child is to bring in one (or more) non-perishable food item. These will be taken monthly to the downtown Ram House location. Teaching children to give to a greater cause and to understand that there are those less fortunate than themselves is an important concept that we feel, if demonstrated early enough, will be instilled in the children.



## Encouraging to Your Child's Successful Preschool Experience

**First Day Tips** - Your child is likely to be as excited and apprehensive as you are about entering preschool on the first day. Parents can make the transition easier with some advance preparation. Talk about what your child is likely to find at school: other children, toys, art materials, books, pleasant surroundings, and most importantly, caring adults.

**Inform us of changes** - To best help your child, it is important to let us know what is happening in your child's life.

- Please let us know about general changes that you notice in your child's health such as illnesses, injuries, changes in sleep and eating patterns, and changes in overall behavior and attitudes.
- Smaller, temporary changes in a child's normal, daily and/or weekly routine can have positive and negative effects on their school day/s. Such changes include not getting to bed on time, not getting a good night's sleep, recent travel, and having visitors staying in the home. Knowing about such temporary changes can help us make adjustments for your child's schedule and activities to help your child.
- Larger, life events can temporarily or permanently greatly affect your child. Whether they are exciting (new baby, new pet), heart-breaking (family members or close friends moving away, parents having relationship troubles/separation/divorce, a serious illness, injury or even the death of a loved one), or events that can be both (parent changes work schedule and/or job, your family is relocating). Change can be difficult. We are here to help, so talk with us about how we can best help your family.
- Please keep in mind a small change to the small world of a small child is HUGE so just imagine the effect a big change has on them. Be patient, loving and seek help and support for them, as well as yourself. ♥

**Children's Art** - When presented with the results of your child's artistic expression, remember it is the *process* more than the product that is important. The creative process can include new knowledge about oneself, about colors and shapes, and improved skill in coordination, language, and socialization. A good response is, "Tell me about this!" Your child can help decide which pieces to keep, which to send to relatives, and which to discard.



## Dressing Your Child for Preschool

### Always dress your child for an *active* day!

- **For your child’s safety, closed-toe footwear is required at all times.** Of course, athletic/gym shoes are the best for active preschoolers, but closed-toe, casual shoes or sandals are also safe for the “stylish preschooler” (Please send a pair of athletic/gym shoes for a quick change when necessary.) Due to the high risk of foot and/or fall injuries from tripping/slipping, absolutely NO open-toe sandals or flip flops are to be worn to JCP.
- **Expect art project mishaps, food spills, and yes, dirt as a by-product of the preschool experience.** In an effort to *try* to protect clothing during art projects, JCP does have the children wear smocks. In an effort to *try* to protect clothing while eating, parents are welcome to send bibs in lunch boxes for their children to wear. Reasonable efforts to *try* to protect clothing during outdoor play will be made; however, it IS the outdoors and “dirt happens”!
- **For our young ladies** Please consider the ease of toileting in the decision to wear skirts and dresses.
- **For our young men** Please consider the ease of toileting in the decision to wear khakis with buttons, hooks and zippers. Due the already high amount of assistance required in toileting this age group, please consider your child comfort when having to dress themselves.
- **Accidents happen. Please send 2 full sets of seasonally appropriate clothing to be kept at JCP in your child’s cubbie.** If the articles of clothing are used, they will need to be replaced the very next day. And don’t forget, as the seasons change, please change the clothes to match the temperatures.





## **Diapering, Potty Training and Toileting**

At JCP, we feel that each child should be allowed to develop at their own rate and level of comfort. Because of this approach, we do not require that children be potty trained in order to enter our program.

Children who are in diapers are required to bring in their own disposable diapers or training pants. We also ask that you share with your child's teacher any special things that might make this easier for the child at school.

We do ask that when your child is ready to begin the new experience of potty training that you inform JCP staff of how you are doing this at home. We want to continue to support your child at school in this endeavor in the most consistent way.

## **Suspicion of Child Abuse/Neglect**

At JCP, safety comes first! If JCP staff suspect abuse or neglect in the home of a student, we will discuss our concerns with the director, and the director is required by law to report these concerns to the proper authorities.



## **Attendance Policy**

If a child is going to be absent, please notify the director by 9:00 AM that day.

If a child is sick, the best place to be is at home, resting, and receiving care. If you bring your child to JCP sick, the child will not be allowed to stay at JCP.

There are several illnesses that come into play regarding the preschool setting. Here are the most common illnesses to be aware of:

- Cold and Stomach Viruses - If a child is running a fever, has vomited, or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours, they are not permitted to attend JCP until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.
- Conjunctivitis or “Pink Eye” - This is a very contagious virus which causes the eye/s to be pink and usually secrete a yellow, runny matter. A child must be seen by a physician and bring written notification from your doctor, before returning.
- Head Lice - This is not uncommon in preschool children. Unlike popular belief, it is not caused by dirtiness. If a child has head lice, they will scratch their head a lot, and lice or nits (very small eggs) will be visible in and on the hair. A child may not come to school until they have had treatment, and there are no more nits.
- Chicken Pox - It is usually about seven days until children with chicken pox are no longer contagious. Consult your child’s physician for the best time to return to school. Written notification is required from your doctor prior to returning to school.

## **Medication Policy**

If your child has to be given medicine while at JCP, you must fill out a medication form for each medicine. Please see the parent packet for a copy of this form.

All medicines are to be stored by the director. In the event that the medicine needs to be refrigerated, it will be placed in the refrigerator by the director.



## Food at JCP

- **JCP Lunch Time** - Learning to eat lunch with friends is a fun, new skill for most preschoolers. Each day, every JCP kid has the opportunity to eat lunch away from their parents, many for the first time, building independence and confidence. At JCP, we like our lunchtime to be a calm, enjoyable time to learn about nourishing and hydrating our bodies. Children will be assisted to wash hands, open containers and packages, sit and eat safely, appropriately using their fingers and/or utensils, and finally clean-up and pack-up afterwards.
- **JCP Lunch Foods** - Lunches are to be packed from home. To best observe the laws of Kashrut, please pack a “dairy lunch” NOT to include meat, shellfish, or shrimp. Peanut butter, eggs, tuna fish and fish sticks are acceptable. We can and are happy to warm any food items in the microwave; just attach a note, “Please warm me!”
- **JCP Snacks** - JCP will provide kosher snacks each day as a mid-morning snack and the Challah for Shabbat on Fridays. If you would like to bring in a special snack for a day, please keep in mind that we want to offer foods that are nutritious, fun and easy to serve and eat. Fresh fruits and vegetables are encouraged. Also, please provide any disposable plastic utensils and paper plates that might be needed for eating the snack.
- **Birthday Celebrations** - Please let us know if you would like to bring in a special snack for your child’s birthday. If you are having a birthday party outside of JCP, and would like to invite children from school, you can give invitations to the homeroom teacher.



## **Enrollment Process**

Enrollment at JCP requires returning the “JCP Student Information Form” with the non-refundable registration fee. Attendance at JCP requires returning the completed JCP enrollment packet.

If a child is to be removed from JCP, the director must be notified one month prior to the date of removal.

### **Waiting List Policy**

If a spot is not available for a child to enroll, parents/guardians will receive a letter stating that the child has been placed on a waiting list, and the registration fee will be *held* pending enrollment. If the child is kept on the waiting list, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as a spot becomes available and the JCP Registration Packet is to be completed. To remove the child from the waiting list, a written request should be sent to the director, and the registration fee will be promptly returned.

### **Tuition**

Monthly fees are the same each month. Used for staff salaries and wages as well as school supplies to provide a high-quality program. No adjustments are made for holidays, snow days, or a student’s inability to attend.

Monthly invoices are printed and sent home in each child’s folder 5-10 days prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. All monthly fees are to be paid in full no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month unless prior arrangements are made in advance with the director. The Late Payment Fee is \$15 for monthly fees not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

At JCP, we are a “school family” and desire to help any family who wishes to be a part of our school family. If your family is experiencing financial difficulties, please do not hesitate to speak with the director as soon as possible.

All questions regarding JCP fees and/or your account are to be addressed with the director.