



PHA Preschool Family Handbook

2022 - 2023

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WHOSE CHILD IS THIS?

“Whose child is this?” I asked one day
Seeing a little one out at play
“Mine” said the parent with a tender smile
“Mine to keep for a little while;
To bathe his hands and comb his hair
To tell her what to wear;
To prepare for him his daily food,
To teach her that she may always be good.”
“Whose child is this?” I asked again.
As the door opened and someone came in.
“Mine” said the teacher with the same tender smile;
“Mine to keep for a little while.
To teach him how to be gentle and kind,
To guide and direct her little mind,
To help him live by every rule.
And get the best she can from school.”
“Whose child is this?” I asked once more
Just as the little one entered the door.
“Ours,” said the parent and teacher as they smiled
And each took a hand of the dear little child.
“Ours to love and guide together.
Ours, this blessed task forever.”
Author Unknown

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Director.....	4
Preschool Philosophy.....	5
Location.....	6
Registration and Enrollment.....	6
Entrance Requirements.....	7
Getting Ready for School.....	7
Arrival and Dismissal.....	7
Transitions.....	8
Health and Safety Policies.....	9
Precautionary Illness Policy.....	10
Emergency Medical.....	10
Medical Consent Forms and Confidentiality.....	10
Our Approach to Discipline.....	11
Biting Policy.....	12
Assessment of Child Progress.....	13
Parents' Rights.....	14
Suspicion of Neglect.....	14
Parent Involvement Policy.....	14
Preschool Activities	
Parent Night, Conferences.....	15
Food Policies.....	15
Birthdays.....	16
Emergency Evacuation Plan.....	16
Parent Acknowledgement Page	17

Dear PHA Preschool Parents,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! Whether you are a returning family or brand new to our school, we are thrilled to have you. At the PHA Preschool, we strive to create a warm and loving environment where your child can grow emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

For all of our new families joining us this year, let me introduce myself. I have been working at the Phoenix Hebrew Academy since 2010 teaching general studies classes at the elementary level and Kodesh in the preschool. I am excited to return this year as the director of our early childhood program bringing to it an exciting thematic curriculum which includes wonderful hands-on activities, stories, and many more learning opportunities.

In this parent handbook you will find all of the information you will need to ensure a successful year for you and your child. Please make sure to read the whole packet in its entirety and return the last page signed and dated to the front office before the first day of school on August 23rd, 2022.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me via e-mail at azupnick@phoenixhebrewacademy.com or by phone at (602) 277-7479.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

Alyssa Zupnick

Early Childhood Director

PHA PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The PHA preschool takes a balanced approach to early childhood education. At the core of our philosophy, we believe that each child is unique and therefore deserves individual attention and care. We incorporate the best practices from different theories and philosophies (child-centered, teacher-directed, project-based, theme-based, group collaboration) and create a warm and inviting Jewish preschool environment where the child is at the center of everything we do.

- To better understand his/her feelings and behavior
- To feel the joy of discovery and become a life-long learner
- To become an individual with strong moral and ethical character
- To make Judaism a valuable and relevant aspect of their life
- To gain meaning and enjoyment in life through relationships with persons from all backgrounds
- To be kind and empathetic to others; to be a good friend
- To feel a part of a larger community and a citizen of the world

LOCATION:

PHA Preschool is located at:

Phoenix Hebrew Academy
515 E. Bethany Home Road
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
602 277-7479
602 274-0713 (Fax)
office@phoenixhebrewacademy.com

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT:

Hours of Operation: Our preschool is open (Monday-Thursday) 7:50am to 3:45pm and (Friday) 7:50am to 2:45pm.

PHA Preschool will be closed during the same Jewish and Federal holidays as the Phoenix Hebrew Academy Day School. For the list of holidays please refer to our academic calendar posted online.

PAYMENTS AND TUITION:

Non-Refundable Registration Fee \$200

Extra Hours: \$10 per hour. Early/After care is **NOT** on a drop in basis. Prior notice must be made with the PHA Preschool office.

2's class

5 Day (M - F)

Full Day 7:50am - 3:45pm \$ 6,400.00

3's & 4's class

5 Day (M-F)

Full Day 7:50am - 3:45pm \$ 6,200.00

Registration form must be accompanied by the non-refundable registration fee. Tuition is a yearly commitment and must be made by submitting 10 postdated checks (August 2021 - May 2022) or by credit / debit card.

Withdrawal procedures: To withdraw a child from school a parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a school withdrawal form.

PHA has the right to disenroll a child at any time.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS: ALL HEALTH FORMS, IMMUNIZATION RECORDS, FEES AND OTHER REQUIRED FORMS MUST BE TURNED IN TO ADMISSIONS OFFICE **PRIOR** TO YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

GETTING READY FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Families are encouraged to attend the Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 21st from 1:30-2:30PM in the shul auditorium!

Some children find it very difficult to be separated from family. This is a big step for a small child; be patient and try to understand how your child feels. However, hesitation to leave on your part can leave an insecure feeling with your child. Help your child understand that you will help if there is a need, but you are confident that he or she will be able to stay without you. Let the teacher guide you; they have helped many other parents and children through the same transition. After all, quick goodbyes leave drier eyes!

BEFORE COMING TO SCHOOL

We encourage you to tell your child about preschool prior to the first day of School. The following are some suggestions:

- There will be other children to play with at school.
- There will be a variety of things to do.
- There will be indoor and outdoor play.
- Snacks and lunch will be served each day.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

1. You must sign your child in and out of the preschool. This will now be done on our Brightwheel platform by the parent or approved drop-off. School sign in begins at 7:50 each day and ends no later than 15 minutes after the end of school. Pick-up will be in the west parking lot and parents should follow carpool protocol. This sign in/sign out procedure is mandated by the Arizona Department of Health Services. You also must complete the emergency form with the names of all persons allowed to transport your child to and from school. **Please be sure to bring your cell phone into school with you in order to easily facilitate this sign-in process.**

2. Other adults permitted to pick up a child must be authorized on the "Emergency Form". Authorization must be received in writing before the child will be released. We will ask for a Photo ID to verify.

3. Take the time to say your good-byes before leaving.

If you are running late for pick-up, please make sure to call Vanessa or Nadine in the front office (602) 277-7479

TRANSITION INTO NEXT CLASS

Teachers will share and pass on portfolios for each child to the next teacher so they may individualize a learning plan for each child. At the time of transition (specifically during the last month of school) teachers will help the children learn what this means through play and stories. They will also take the children into the next class so that they can become familiar with the new environment. The new teachers will share stories and play with them as they become familiar with each other. We encourage parents to have conversations with their child/children about this change and how exciting it will be as well.

TRANSITION INTO KINDERGARTEN (OUT OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAM)

We will follow the same steps of transition as they would moving into the next class. Teachers will share and pass along portfolios from each child to the next teacher so they may individualize a learning plan for each child. At the time of transition (during the last month of preschool) teachers will work with the kids on how to handle the upcoming transition. Teachers will model this through stories, play and will take the children to the next classroom to familiarize them with the space and teacher. The new teachers will share stories and play with them to help acquaint them to the environment. We encourage parents to have conversations with their child/children about the upcoming change to help answer any of the questions and settle fears.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

HAND WASHING: To reduce the risk of transmission of infections to themselves and others, all children should wash their hands upon arrival at Preschool. This may take place in the bathrooms or at the sinks in the classroom.

Proper Hand Washing Procedure:

- 1** Use liquid soap and running water
- 2** Wet hands before applying soap
- 3** Rub hands vigorously for at least 30 seconds. Include back of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails
- 4** Rinse thoroughly
- 5** Dry hands with paper towels
- 6** Use paper towel to turn off faucet

Medicine at preschool: No medicines are administered to children at school. Parents may come on campus to administer medication if necessary. The only exceptions are prescribed inhalers, epi-pens, and allergy medications related to asthma or reactions to food. The medication must be checked in at the office so the correct forms are filled out and procedures can be followed by staff.

CLOTHING AND ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME

Dress your child simply and comfortably in washable play clothes. Children should wear closed toed shoes (no sandals or crocs) in order to feel both free and secure in active play. A set of weather appropriate extra clothing should be kept in each child's cubby. The school cannot be responsible for items brought from home and therefore we are asking that all toys be left at home. PHA Preschool is not responsible for lost or damaged items that are brought to school.

All items brought from home should be marked with your child's first and last name.

Toilet Training: all children entering the 3's or Pre-K, MUST to be toilet trained. We understand an occasional accident may occur. Parents must check with their child's teacher each time to remove soiled clothing and be willing to replace it by the following school day. The only exception would be a child with specific medical needs accompanied by a doctor's note.

Parents and teachers will determine how this important transition will be handled at school. An effective parent-teacher partnership is best for the child's development.

Cots and Cot Sheets: Cots are used for naptime to allow children to lie comfortably while sleeping at school. Each child who naps must have his/her own cot sheet & blanket. The cot sheets are sent home every Friday for you to wash and must be sent back to school the following week.

Arizona Department of Health Services Regulations:

- 1.** Phoenix Hebrew Academy Preschool is fully covered by liability insurance as mandated by the Arizona Department of Health Services –Child Care Licensing (AAC R9-5-302). A copy of our certificate of insurance is available for viewing in the front office.
- 2.** PHA preschool receives regularly scheduled and as needed pesticide control. Notice of treatment/spraying will be posted 48 hours prior to the treatment.
- 3.** Our license classification (posted in the front office) – Full day care for 2's, 3's and 4 year-olds. The Arizona Department of Health Services, located at 150 North 18th Ave, Suite 400, Phoenix, Arizona 85007 (602) 364-2539, regulates PHA Preschool facility.

PRECAUTIONARY ILLNESS POLICY
IF YOUR CHILD IS UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL
PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE: (602)277-7479

Precautions are in place at PHA Preschool to protect your child, other children, and our staff. **If your child has a fever, a new cold, or has experienced a fever or vomiting during the previous 24 hours, you must keep your child at home. Students with influenza-like illness must remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.** It is the responsibility of the parent to know that the child is well before left at school. Staff will be doing daily health checks as children arrive.

If your child develops a fever or shows signs of illness at school including but not limited to two bouts of loose bowels or vomiting the parent will be called to pick up the child. A doctor's note may be necessary when the child's absence has been due to communicable disease. Parents will be notified when a child has been exposed to a contagious disease at school. PHA Preschool follows health closure policies set by the Arizona Department of Health.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION:

Injury reports will be used to notify parents of any minor injuries. For more severe injuries, teachers will contact the parent and the school administrators. If there is an extreme emergency and 911 transports a child to emergency care, an adult will accompany the child.

MEDICAL CONSENT FORMS:

Each child is required by state regulations to have on file a current medical form. It must include record of immunizations signed by the doctor or county health department. The preschool must have a medical release which is signed by the parent or guardian authorizing emergency care and transfer of medical records to the local hospital. It must have emergency names and numbers for reaching parents or guardian, as well as another authorized person. Parents are asked to provide the following health insurance information:

1. Permission to access family insurance in the event of a serious accident while the child is at school
2. The names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child

In addition to parents' health insurance, PHA Preschool carries liability insurance.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS:

Children's records are open to the child's teacher, the school administration, or the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

OUR APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE

Our philosophy for discipline is as follows:

- We have low child/teacher ratios so that children are **always** supervised and have adult intervention when needed.
- Redirection and modeling of expected behaviors by adults is used daily. Teachers model words and actions for children.
- Teachers realize that temperaments, development, and children's experiences at home are highly individual and unique for every child.
- We understand that being in a group of peers at school is different from being at home; and that some children need more time to adapt to this environment.
- We enable the child to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults.
- Discipline includes positive guidance, redirection, and setting of clear limits which fosters the child's own ability to regulate emotions.

If an incident of behavior requiring disciplinary measures occurs, the parent will be notified that same day. If a pattern of behavior emerges in a particular child, the teacher, in consultation with the school administration, will schedule a conference with the parents to discuss how the school and home can best guide the child to make better choices during difficult times.

If the behavior persists, or creates an unsafe environment, the school and parents will work with outside professionals to develop a plan that will best help the child. If all options have been exhausted, the school and parent team will decide if the school is able to continue to provide care for the child or if he/she will have to find care elsewhere.

BITING

Current research suggests that biting is a normal developmental phase for infants and toddlers, but when it happens; it can be scary and frustrating for everyone involved. Due to the developmental nature of most biting, experts stress that biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or teachers.

Experts believe that biting in toddlers between the ages of 12 and 36 months is a form of communication (i.e., to communicate frustration while learning social, language and self-control skills). Toddlers seldom plan ahead, but rather they see and act on what they are experiencing at the moment. Biting becomes a powerful way to communicate with and control others and the environment.

Because theorists think that biting may be related to the child's development stage, punishment in general is not advised either at home or at the child care center. Instead, experts recommend focusing attention on the victim, shielding the victim from the biter, initiating first aid measures as necessary, and consoling the victim.

For safety and health concerns, we take biting very seriously. Our staff members quickly remove the biter from the situation without dramatic movements, attention, or an emotional response that could provide negative reinforcement to the biter. Parents and caregivers can tell the biter that biting is not "OK", "I can't let you hurt your friends," etc. Caregivers will need to make sure that the biter is not near other children until he or she has calmed down and can be redirected to other play. Guidance to children who bite should be provided with the goal of helping children develop inner control of their feelings and actions. A quick and consistent response at home and in the classroom can help children who bite learn to express their feelings in words so that they can become better able to control their behavior.

When biting, pushing, or severe hitting occurs in school, the parents of the child who bites, pushes, or hits as well as the parents of the child who is hurt, are notified privately at the end of the school day. To maintain privacy, for confidential reasons, the names of children involved will not be given out. The school administrator and the teacher will handle each situation as needed.

ASSESSMENT OF CHILD PROGRESS

PHA Preschool is always assessing children as an integral part of our program. We see assessments as an ongoing process which supports the children's learning in all domains of development: social and emotional, motor, cognitive, language, and physical. Although observations along with documentation are our primary sources of assessment, checklists, work samples, and assessments from parents may also be used. Children may be referred for diagnostic assessment when it is appropriate. In that case, the school and parents will work together to find the appropriate formal assessment, working with physicians, psychologists, and other sources. Assessments used at PHA Preschool include the following:

1. Orientation Questionnaires are filled out at the beginning of each school year with parents and used by staff to identify family values, interests, and culture. Portfolios are cumulative during the child's tenure at the school. These portfolios are kept at the school and used by child, families, and staff throughout the year.
2. Ongoing written and photo documentation of child's progress, activity choices, social/emotional, cognitive, creative, and physical development.
3. A CDC checklist and an ASQ checklist are done yearly and available at parent conferences.
4. Parent/Teacher conference in the fall regarding adjustment to school and goals for the child for the year.
5. An end-of-the year form for each child is filled out by teachers to ensure that information is shared with the next year's teachers to assist in smooth transitions between classes.
6. Individual Educational Plans are used for children with identified special needs. An application is filled out by parent when child is enrolled each year.

* All assessments are kept confidential and completed forms are filed in the office for safe keeping.

PARENTS' RIGHTS

1. Parents/guardian, upon presentation of identification, have the right to enter and inspect the child day care facility, in which their child(ren) are receiving care, without advance notice to the provider. Entry and inspection is limited to the normal operating hours while their child(ren) is receiving care.
2. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any parent/guardian for exercising their right to inspect.
3. The law requires that parent/guardian be notified of their right to enter and inspect.
4. The law requires that this notice of parents' rights to enter and inspect be posted in the facility in a location accessible to parents/guardians.
5. The law authorizes the person in charge of the child day care facility to deny access to the parent/guardian under the following circumstances.
 - a. The parent/guardian is behaving in such a way which poses a risk to the children or the facility.

SUSPICION OF CHILD NEGLECT OR ABUSE

PHA Preschool faculty and staff are mandated by the State of Arizona to report any suspicion of Child Abuse or Neglect, as are physicians, health workers, and school teachers. This is for the protection of all children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

All parents are encouraged to get involved in Preschool events and activities throughout the year. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year. Informal conferences with teachers are encouraged throughout the year. Parents are asked to evaluate our Preschool Program at the end of each school year. We encourage your comments and suggestions throughout the year. Teachers will inform parents of the daily happenings at school, either verbally or by a written posted note. Please also check your parent file and/or child's cubby and tote bag each day. Every week a newsletter will go home with the students. This newsletter will give a detailed review of what the students participated in and learned that week. Parents will be able to use it as a guide to ask their children questions about the curriculum that is being presented in their classrooms!

OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED:

- Provide help in the classroom by assisting with art time, cooking, etc.
- Read a story during *Shabbat* time or other time coordinated with classroom teacher
- Become a part of the school's PTO
- Help organize and volunteer for school fundraising events
- Be a room parent
- Share your career or hobby. Be a guest speaker, we will show you how!

If you are interested in any of the above, please contact the PHA Preschool Director for information on how to sign up.

PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES

BACK TO SCHOOL - PARENT NIGHT:

Back to School Night is an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teachers in. This is a great time for parents to meet the teachers, learn the classroom curriculum, see their child's learning space and ask any questions. This event is scheduled for **Tuesday, August 30th, 2022.**

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Our calendar allows for two additional scheduled conferences throughout the year. This is a wonderful time for you to sit with your child's teacher and focus on strengths, accomplishments and the development of your child. You will see work samples, photos, and developmental assessments of your child. These meetings are a great opportunity for you to set new goals for your child with their teacher.

During the school year, parents and/or teachers may request a conference or meeting to discuss a child or to just check in with each other. Parents may also request a copy of the assessment forms used by the teachers. Teachers must also maintain confidentiality concerning other children and families and therefore cannot and must not discuss other children with you.

Conference Dates:

Wednesday, November 2nd -Afternoon

Monday, February 6th, 4:15-6:15 PM

INDIVIDUAL LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Parents are responsible to provide morning and afternoon snack for their child. We also have a breakfast and lunch program. A Menu and pricelist will go home every month. If you wish to purchase breakfast or lunch for your child simply fill out the form, attach the correct amount of money and return it to the office when you sign your child in.

Applications for free and reduced meals are provided in the office.

Remember to inform PHA staff if your child has any allergies!

If you pack lunch for your child, lunches brought to school must be either dairy or *pareve* ("*pareve*" means neither dairy nor meat, and free from any dairy or meat by-products or derivatives). All food must adhere to the laws of Kashrut. A list of reliable Rabbic "Hechsherim" will gladly be provided. We are a nut free school so please make sure anything sent with your child is nut free.

GROUP MEALS, SNACKS, AND PARTIES

Food items brought into class for any celebration, program, or project and designed for the class as a whole, MUST have a recognized *kashrut* symbol or be purchased in a bakery or other establishment under approved rabbinical supervision* (If you are unsure, please check with the school office). Home baked food is not permitted for class functions. Food brought to the school by parents that does not conform to the above rules will not be distributed to the students.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS-

The school and its staff work very hard to create an environment where each child feels a sense of belonging and acceptance. It can be very damaging to a child's self-esteem if he or she feels excluded from a classmate's birthday party. We ask that you guide your children to be sensitive to the feelings of others and to plan their parties accordingly.

If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom, please consult with your classroom teacher on the best time for you to come. Please feel free to bring table decorations and paper goods to make the celebration extra special!

PHA PRESCHOOL

EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND DISASTER PLAN

The following is a synopsis of our policy and the plan which provides for the safe evacuation of the premises to the School Parking Lot and emergency care of the children until they are reunited with their families.

Responsibility:

SCHOOL

The school will retain responsibility of all the children on premises until they are released to a parent, guardian, or other designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected staff will remain with the children until all have been reunited with their families.

PHA does not provide transportation.

PHA does not organize field trips for preschool children.

EMPLOYEES

All staff members will remain on the premises and assume emergency duties, in which they have been instructed, including First Aid and CPR.

PARENTS

Parents should not telephone the school as this ties up critically needed phone lines. They should listen to the radio for progress reports on whatever disaster is taking place. Follow official instructions as relayed by officials via the radio. If parents are able to reach the school without danger to themselves or without interference with disaster workers, they should come to pick up their children. If necessary, parents may remain with their children at the evacuation site if they agree to comply with the procedures established and being implemented by the authority in charge.

1. **DRILLS:** We will be conducting drills of the Disaster Procedures throughout the school year with and without the children to familiarize the children and staff with the plan. We strongly urge you to formulate a plan for your entire family and to discuss it with your children as you would for a fire. If you have any questions about the plan, please contact the PHA Preschool Administration.

Parent Acknowledgement Page

Childs Name: _____

**Please sign and return this page to the PHA front office by
Tuesday, August 30th.**

I have read and I understand the Preschool Handbook and all of the information therein.

Parent signature _____

Parent name _____

Date _____