



Hillel Torah
בית ספר הלל תורה

Welcome to the Alana Beth Stein Hillel Torah Preschool 2025 - 2026 School Year

As your child enters the exciting world of Preschool, we're sure you have many questions.

This Preschool Handbook provides answers as you prepare for a wonderful year of growth and learning!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL! | 2 |
| IMPORTANT DATES | 2 |
| At-Home Activities to Help Your Child Transition to Preschool | 3 |
| Help Your Child Prepare for the School Day | 3 |
| SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE | 3 |
| SPECIALS | 4 |
| STAY & PLAY | 4 |
| ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES | 4 |
| PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION | 5 |
| STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS | 6 |
| CLASSROOM DRESS CODE | 7 |
| FOOD GUIDELINES | 7 |
| BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT SCHOOL | 7 |
| SICK CHILD POLICY | 8 |
| MEDICATION & ALLERGIES | 8 |
| ABSENCE | 8 |
| GETTING MORE INVOLVED AT HILLEL TORAH | 9 |
| SCHOOL SUPPLIES | 10 |

Welcome to Preschool!



The first day is coming, and it's a big day for us all! We want it to be the first of many warm, engaging, and exciting school days.

Every child is special, and your child will receive the nurturing and attention needed for a positive Preschool experience.

We look forward to working with you and hope this handbook helps answer some of your questions.



IMPORTANT DATES

Aug 29

Preschool orientation by appointment

Sept 2

First Day of School for all Pre-Nursery and Nursery students

Early Drop Off and Stay and Play (2:30-4:30 pm) begins

Sept 10

Preschool Open School Night 8:00 pm

At-Home Activities to Help Your Child Transition to Preschool

- Allow your child to practice dressing independently by pulling up pants/skirts and putting on shirts/jackets.
- Review bathroom procedures and etiquette (such as washing hands with soap and water after using the bathroom).
- Encourage consistent activities (such as putting away toys or setting the table).
- Have set times for wake-up and bedtime, playtime, and rest time.
- Invite an adult to read with your child daily.
- Discuss your child's experiences with him/her (such as your trips to the zoo, museums, shopping, etc.).

Help Your Child Prepare for the School Day

- Ensure s/he is rested and well-nourished.
- Wake him/her early enough to get dressed in clean clothes, eat a leisurely breakfast (there is no breakfast in school), and arrive on time.
- Discourage bringing any toys from home - our classrooms have so many!
- Remember to take your child to the bathroom before drop-off.

Children who arrive late miss important social and learning activities.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival: 8:50 - 9:00

Circle Time/Tefilla: 9:15- 9:30

Snack/Quiet Reading: 9:30 - 9:55

Exploration: 10:00 - 11:30

Playground: 11:30 - 12:15

Lunch: 12:15 - 1:00

Rest Time: 1:00 - 1:30

Exploration: 1:30 - 2:15

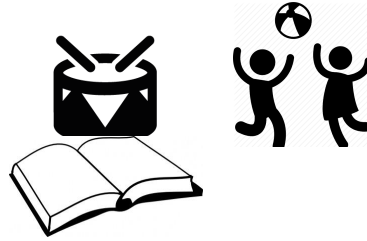
Story & Pack Up: 2:15 - 2:30

Dismissal: 2:30

SPECIALS

Our Preschool program offers a variety of special activities throughout the week:

- Activities with the Bnot Sherut
- Music and movement with Morah Linda
- Gym with Coach Halie and Coach Nick
- Sing-a-Long with Rabbi Linzer
- STEM with Morah Kerry



In addition to our daily specialists, a pediatric speech and language pathologist, an occupational therapist, and a licensed professional mental health counselor are on staff to work in classrooms every week. These professionals offer their expertise and support while working with many of our preschool children to ensure every child receives the support he/she needs.

STAY & PLAY

From 2:30-4:30 pm, Stay & Play adds even more to your child's Preschool day! The afternoon is filled with play, hands-on exploration, and outdoor time on the playground. An afternoon snack is provided.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

8:50 am - 9:05 am Regular Arrival

Curbside drop-off is from 8:50 am until 9:05 am. Please help unbuckle your child so that he or she can exit the car as easily as possible. For the safety of all of our families and staff, **we kindly ask that you remain in your car at all times.** Our goal is to move through the line as quickly and safely as possible. If you arrive after 9:05 am, park and walk your child into school through the entrance located on Monticello.

Pre-Nursery: Use the circular drive on East Prairie in front of the building at the shul entrance. A teacher will greet you at your car and bring your child inside.

Nursery: Join the drop-off line on Monticello. There will be an area near the school door for you to pull up to drop off next to the sidewalk closest to the school. A teacher will greet you at your car and bring your child inside.

Early Drop Off

Children should be dropped off at the Monticello school entrance at 8:00 am. If you arrive after 8:10 am, even if you see the teachers still outside, park and walk your child inside or to a teacher. Teachers need to actively supervise the children and cannot come to the cars in the drop-off line after 8:10 am. After ringing the bell and entering the building, you will walk your child to the Early Drop Off classroom. Children are welcome to bring "breakfast on the go" such as dry cereal, breakfast bars, etc., to eat while in the Early Drop Off room.

Dismissal

2:30 pm Dismissal

Pre-Nursery children will be dismissed from the East Prairie entrance.

Nursery children will be dismissed from the Monticello entrance.

At the East Prairie exit, wait at the bottom of the steps outside to alleviate congestion near the doors and hold the provided sign with your child's last name so that the teachers can easily identify you.

Dismissal Procedures:

- Children wait indoors until a parent/caregiver arrives.
- Parents/caregivers must park their cars and walk up to the building, there is no curbside pick-up during dismissal.
- Teachers will be at designated doors, the parent/caregiver will display their name sign, and the children will be dismissed one at a time to each parent/caregiver.
- Double parking is not allowed.
- Please do not park blocking the walkways during arrival or dismissal.
- Any changes in daily carpool arrangements must be indicated in a written note or emailed to htearlychildhood@hilleltorah.org or by calling the Preschool office at 847-677-1021.

4:30 pm Dismissal

Prior to 4:30 pm, parents picking up should ring the school doorbell at the Monticello door and come inside to pick up their child. Around 4:20 pm, all remaining students will be brought outside to wait at the Monticello school doors. If you call the Preschool after 3 pm and are unable to reach someone, please contact our main school office at 847-674-6533. Please note that all children must be picked up no later than 4:30 pm. A \$10 late fee will be charged for every five minutes past 4:30 pm.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We make it easy for you to stay up-to-date on your child's school activities.

- Preschool weekly newsletters and important information are sent out through Kaymbu, our online Early Childhood communication tool.
- Shared moments and pictures are emailed periodically through the Kaymbu system.
- The weekly Hillel Torah Highlights (an all-school email newsletter) reviews the week's major events and announces upcoming events.
- Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, and online report cards are emailed home in June.
- The family directory can be found on ParentLocker, and information for hot lunch sign-up is emailed at the start of the year. Like and follow our [Facebook page](#) and [Instagram account](#) for real-time pictures, daily happenings, and the latest announcements.
- Please note that teachers do not check email during the school day. For time-sensitive matters, call the office at 847-677-1021 or email htearlychildhood@hilleltorah.org.

STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Guiding Philosophy

Maintaining a positive school atmosphere that promotes safe and healthy social relationships between all members of our school community is a central pillar of our school.

The Torah underscores these values, placing a supreme value on *ben adam l'chaveiro* (interpersonal conduct). Our sages teach that *derech erez kadma l'Torah*—for students to learn, we must first have an atmosphere of positive behavior and mutual respect.

Creating a positive environment where all community members feel safe requires the collaboration of teachers, students, parents, and administrators around shared values. At home, we ask parents to partner with us in instilling the importance of positive behavior in their children and working together to navigate challenges if they arise.

School Conduct Expectations

Our school norms center around four main principles:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be Kind

Expected behaviors include:

- Respectful conduct with all people
- Inclusiveness with peers
- Adhering to safety rules
- Remaining honest
- Respecting the physical boundaries of others
- Respecting others' belongings and school property

Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespectful or disruptive behavior
- Damage to others' property
- Dishonesty, including lying, stealing or cheating
- Inappropriate or hurtful language
- Bullying, excluding, threatening, intimidating
- Unsafe behavior
- Physical aggression, including hitting, punching, grabbing, pushing
- Inappropriate or unwanted physical contact
- Targeting another based on race, gender, political views, etc.

CLASSROOM DRESS CODE

Clothing

- Clothing should be simple, not too tight, safe, and easy to manage.
- Boys should wear tzitzit and a kippah (no hats, please).
- On gym days, girls are required to wear pants/shorts.
- All clothing (including outerwear such as coats and boots) should be washable and clearly labeled.



Shoes

- Shoes must have backs and be appropriate for outdoor play (no sandals, Crocs, or slippers).
- On gym days, sneakers are required.
- Please only send shoes with shoelaces if your child can tie them independently.
- Boots should be large enough to be put on independently.
- Snow/rain boots may not be worn in class - an extra pair of shoes may be kept at school.

Please label all your child's clothing (including outerwear).

FOOD GUIDELINES

Provide your child with a nutritious kosher lunch, snack, and water bottle daily.

- Send in a reusable, already-filled water bottle each day. All water bottles should be clearly labeled with your child's name.
- On Monday through Thursday, provide your child with a healthy snack (some ideas include fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese sticks, yogurt, pretzels, and veggie straws). Snacks should be sent in a separate bag from lunch, clearly labeled with your child's name. If a utensil is needed, please provide one along with the snack.
- Children may not share or trade lunch or snack items.
- Eating utensils and drinks will not be provided by the school.
- Please only send water to drink.
- Preschool hot lunch is offered through the PTA, details and ordering information will be sent out at the beginning of the school year.
- The Preschool adheres to Hillel Torah's "No-Nut Policy." All foods with nut ingredients may not be brought to school (see Parent Handbook for more information).

Acceptable Kosher Symbols



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT SCHOOL

The school welcomes you to celebrate your child's birthday! If you would like, you may provide a special, store-bought birthday snack for the class. Contact your child's teacher to coordinate. If you would like to donate a book or gift in honor of your child's birthday, please ask your child's teacher for suggestions.



SICK CHILD POLICY

- Call the school nurse at 847-674-6533 to report any illness.
- Contagious diseases must be reported to the nurse immediately so notices can be sent to all the parents of the children in the class.
- If the school calls to inform you that your child is ill, please arrange for pick up as quickly as possible and keep your child home from school until symptom-free for 24 hours.
- Children who are unwell and unable to participate in our activities at school need to stay home.

We strive to maintain the wellness of the Hillel Torah community, which requires consideration and care from each family. If your child can't participate in all activities due to illness, fever, extreme coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, or fatigue, you will be asked to keep your child at home.

Children should remain at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Excessive nasal discharge, with or without fever.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. After vomiting, a child should remain home for 24 hours, with or without fever.
- A fever of 100 degrees or more. Children should be fever-free without medicine for 24 hours before they return to school.
- Parents are required to notify the school if their child has a diagnosis of Covid, strep throat, or any other infectious illness or disease, including conjunctivitis or lice. We notify parents of infectious diseases in the class.

MEDICATION & ALLERGIES

- Please fill out the proper form with our office if your child takes any medications during the school day or has allergies.
- There is a separate form for an [Allergy](#) or [Asthma Action Plan](#) if your child has allergies or asthma.
- Our office staff is trained to administer medicines and asthma inhalers as needed, but can only do so with a consent form on file with our office.
- In case of an emergency, the school will always call 911 and then notify the parent immediately.

ABSENCE

- If your child will be tardy or absent for the day, or if your child will be leaving school before dismissal, call the preschool office or email htearlychildhood@hilleltoray.org.
- Please inform your child's teachers in advance if your child will miss a few days of school (ex. for vacation, family *simcha*, etc).

GETTING MORE INVOLVED AT HILLEL TORAH

A Note from the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The Hillel Torah Parent Teacher Association (HT PTA) supports many projects benefiting students, teachers, and parents, with the goal of enriching and enhancing each child's experience at Hillel Torah. Programs are held during the school year where you can connect with other parents, have fun together, discuss common challenges, and hear from speakers.



It is important to take an active part in school life, and we welcome your ideas and suggestions. Please email the PTA Co-Presidents at ptapresidents@hilleltorah.org for more information regarding membership and volunteer opportunities.

Stephanie Strenger and Shevy Pressburger
PTA Presidents

Hillel Torah offers many exciting opportunities for parent involvement. Below are a variety of ways to become part of our family!

- **Give/Get** – Opportunities to earn Give/Get credit will be announced throughout the year. Volunteering at hot lunch, events, library, or office help are just a few ways you can earn credit and be involved. Please contact Dov Shandalov at dov.shandalov@hilleltorah.org if you have questions about our Give/Get program.
- **Parent Teacher Association** – Our very active PTA offers numerous options for parent involvement throughout the year. Whether volunteering at the Book Fair or running an event, there is no shortage of opportunities.
- **Grade Parents** – Each year, a parent volunteer per grade is selected to coordinate different programs and aid our teachers as needed.
- **Mystery Reader** – Mystery Reader is an opportunity for family or friends to visit your child's class and read them a story virtually over Zoom. After hearing the story, the children try to guess who the mystery reader is and are happily surprised and proud when they find out!

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Bring to school on Orientation Day:

- ★ A shoebox with a complete change of clothing (boys -include an extra kippah & clips). Label everything in the box and check clothing periodically for changes in size and season.
- ★ One digital photo of your child and one digital family photo should be emailed to htearlychildhood@hilleltorah.org before Orientation.

Bring to school daily:

- ★ A large backpack with a wide opening (minimum opening 9"x12") to accommodate school projects (no wheelies, please).
- ★ A kosher snack and lunch, including a beverage and cutlery (refrigeration is not available). Please do not send soda pop, hard candies, lollipops, or gum.
- ★ Tzedaka – a penny a day is suggested. Please send two rolls of pennies to keep at school in a bag or closed container.
- ★ Reusable, filled water bottle.



EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Rabbi Menachem Linzer, Principal
Rabbi Dov Pianko, Director of Judaic Studies
Miriam Kopelow, Director of General Studies
Jennifer Wasserman, Director of Early Childhood
Rivka Varnai, Director of Student Services
Sari Kravitt, Dean of Student Life, Primary School
Hannah Kowitt, Dean of Student Life, Middle School

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Yehudit Gavant
Daniel Salvadori
Tanya Lubin
Yitzi Matanky

Jeremy Fogel
Amy Spar
Lev Katz
Miriam Friedman

Laurie Hasten
Tali Gevaryahu
Deena Goldman
Tzvi Harris

Mazel Levin
Ariel Redlich
Julie Thomas

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Dov Shandalov, Business Administrator
Karin Felix, Director of Admissions
Chaya Gordon Burstyn, Director of Communications
Morrine Sweer, Director of Development

