

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

Parent Handbook



2025-26

5786 Academic Year

www.hha.ca

HHH 2025/2026 Handbook

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Welcome to Our School!

We are delighted to welcome you as a member of our HHA Family. Our mission at the HHA is to nurture and advance each student's academic, emotional, physical, moral, and spiritual growth. For over 60 years, our graduates have excelled in all facets of life, assuming prominent leadership roles within Jewish communities worldwide. We are excited to continue and enrich these proud traditions together.

On a personal note, I am deeply grateful to serve as Principal at the HHA and to collaborate with our extraordinary educators, staff, and families. Please feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions. My door is always open!

This Handbook is designed as a practical guide to foster clarity and transparency, ensuring a strong and collaborative partnership. We encourage you to review its contents and welcome any feedback.

As a vibrant learning community, we are committed to fostering an engaging environment that stimulates curiosity and expands knowledge. Your support and partnership are invaluable as we embark on a new school year dedicated to providing an optimal Jewish learning experience.

Thank you, HHA parents, for your ongoing partnership and trust. Our dedicated staff is fully committed to providing your children with exceptional education, essential life skills, and the tools they need for success.

We look forward to continued growth, success, and the opportunity to strengthen personal relationships with each of you. May we continue to have a beautiful day at the HHA!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ymorel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rabbi Yaakov Morel, Principal

II. Mission Statement

The Hamilton Hebrew Academy (HHA) is dedicated to fostering an inclusive learning environment that welcomes and embraces children and their families from diverse Jewish affiliations and backgrounds. We are committed to the development of the whole child by nurturing the unique intellectual, emotional, and spiritual well-being of each individual student.

At the HHA, we value inquiry, self-expression, and independent thinking as integral components of the learning process. Our school is dedicated to providing the framework for students to explore, extend, and intensify their involvement with Jewish living in an open and understanding atmosphere.

This is achieved by instilling 'Core Jewish Beliefs' in our students:

- A love for lifelong learning.
- A passion for Torah and Jewish living.
- A strong foundation of Jewish knowledge.
- A deep commitment to the broader Jewish community.
- An appreciation of the centrality of Israel in our lives, with an emphasis on the historical and religious significance of the State of Israel.
- The moral and ethical values of Judaism through practical integration.
- A sense of civic responsibility.
- A universal outlook of social concern.

We believe that every Jewish child has a right to Jewish education. We are committed to meeting the diverse learning needs of our students. A positive school culture is created through the fostering of an effective Partnership Triangle, consisting of our staff, students, and parents, all working together with the students' best interests at the centre of our decisions and efforts. Your children are the future!

III. Working Together for Student Success: Roles & Responsibilities

At our school, we believe that education flourishes through partnership. When students, parents, educators, and school leadership work together, we create a nurturing and respectful environment where every child can thrive. Each member of our community plays an essential role in shaping our school's culture and supporting student success.

The Role of the Principal

The Principal plays a key leadership role in shaping the daily life of the school and fostering a positive, inclusive learning environment. In collaboration with staff, students, and families, the Principal is committed to:

1. Promoting a culture of care, academic excellence, and safety for all members of the school community.
2. Supporting and guiding staff and students in maintaining high standards of behaviour and accountability.
3. Engaging in regular, meaningful communication with parents, staff, and students to build trust, strengthen partnerships, and support student success.

Together with the entire school community, the Principal helps to create a thriving environment where students can learn, grow, and succeed.

The Role of Teachers & School Staff

Teachers and school staff help create a safe, respectful, and supportive school environment. As role models, they work in partnership with students and families to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and care. They do so by:

1. Supporting each student in reaching their full potential and building a strong sense of self-worth.
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2. Maintaining open communication with parents and guardians.
 3. Applying fair and consistent expectations for student behaviour across all settings
 4. Demonstrating respect in every interaction with students, colleagues, and parents.
 5. Helping students understand their roles and responsibilities as engaged, caring members of the community.

The Role of Parents

At our school, we believe that education is a shared journey between parents, students, and staff. When we work together, we create the most supportive and enriching environment for our children to grow and thrive. We invite parents to partner with us in the following ways:

1. Maintain open and ongoing communication with the school team.
2. Help your child arrive at school on time, prepared, and ready to learn each day.
3. Support your child in presenting themselves with care by ensuring they are neat and wear the school uniform appropriately.
4. Reinforce positive behaviours and encourage your child to follow school expectations.
5. Take time to review the Code of Conduct and school policies together with your child.
6. Collaborate with school staff in addressing any behavioural concerns in a respectful and solution-focused manner.
7. Please notify the School Office promptly if your child will be absent or arrive late.

The Role of Students

Students are the heart of our school community and play a leading role in shaping its culture. By taking responsibility for their actions and showing respect for others, they help create a school environment where everyone can thrive. This is demonstrated when students:

1. Treat themselves, their peers, and all members of the school community with kindness and respect.
2. Arrive at school on time, prepared, and ready to engage in learning.
3. Make safe and thoughtful choices, including not bringing items that could compromise the well-being of others.
4. Follow school guidelines and take ownership of their behaviour and decisions.

Through strong collaboration and shared values, we each play a vital role in shaping a positive and inclusive school culture.

IV. School Communication and Record-Keeping

1. The Ontario Student Record

In accordance with Provincial legislation, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy maintains an Ontario Student Record (OSR) for each student. All pertinent information regarding a child's educational record is maintained in the OSR, which parents or guardians may request to review.

2. Electronic Communication

A current email address is requested from each family. This database will be used for official school communications and announcements. In keeping with the school's environmental ethos, where possible, electronic transmission will be the primary method of communication with students and parents. The confidentiality of the addresses, as well as other demographic and personal information, will be protected, and its contents will not be shared outside of the School Office.

3. PWA (Parent WhatsApp Group)

General school and class communication are often shared via a PWA (Parent WhatsApp Group) specific to your child's grade. Parents are requested to join WhatsApp to receive PWA notifications.

If this is not possible, please notify the school office. The following are the communication guidelines that we ask parents to adhere to while communicating via the PWA:

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- a. The PWA is a communication tool for class logistics only.
 - b. Updates of a personal nature that do not pertain to the class should not be posted.
 - c. Parental concerns regarding academic or social issues should not be posted on the PWA.
 - d. Teachers will not be included in the PWA since teacher appreciation initiatives may be discussed. As such, teachers will not be communicating with their class through the PWA.
 - e. Keep discussions on topic.
 - f. Give everyone the benefit of the doubt and judge favorably. Try to find ways to read things positively.
 - g. Be considerate of other people's feelings, as well as their beliefs.
 - h. Respectful dialogue should be maintained at all times, including disagreements.
 - i. Report honestly and fairly, ensuring that incidents are not oversimplified or taken out of context.
 - j. Confirm your information before posting, or couch your language with appropriate disclaimers.
 - k. Do not knowingly publish false information. Distinguish between fact, suspicion and opinion.
 - l. Do not post defamatory information, even if true and available elsewhere.
 - m. Disclose conflicts of interest, affiliations, and agendas. When that is not possible, avoid topics where these conflicts may affect the subject.
 - n. Do not use profanity or sexually suggestive language.
 - o. Do not violate people's privacy or confidence.
 - p. Do not spam. Spamming includes leaving repeated comments that promote a specific idea or website, often by repeating the same point multiple times.
 - q. Do not troll. Trolling is the posting of inflammatory comments with the intent to provoke or disrupt.
 - r. RESPECT THAT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CLASS REP TO REMOVE ANY POST THAT DOES NOT MEET THE ABOVE STANDARDS EVEN WHEN THE POSTS ARE WELL INTENDED.

To ensure that we continually meet our objectives, the HHA reserves the right to modify certain aspects of this Agreement. **By signing this Handbook, parents or guardians accept and agree to the above conditions.**

4. Official School Publications

The HHA E-bulletin is our newsletter of record. It is published on Fridays and distributed electronically. The purpose of the Bulletin is to keep the HHA community informed about the school's philosophy, activities, and current events. The Bulletin can also serve as a forum for announcing new policies and administrative procedures. The promotion of products or services is only permitted if they are specifically and directly sponsored by the school. The newsletter may carry messages of comfort or support to HHA students, staff and their families in times of personal celebration or grief. While an effort is made to send home all notices on Fridays, urgent notices may be sent home on other days.

5. Our School Website

The school website is www.hha.ca, where information about the school is available to the general public. Additionally, the school maintains a section of the website accessible only to students and parents, which is used for communication within the HHA community. The site features a live calendar for school-related events. Information on this calendar will be updated regularly. It is recommended that you subscribe to this calendar by clicking the button located at the bottom right of the calendar itself.

6. Communication Protocol between Parent and School

Parents who wish to discuss their child's progress with a teacher or have a concern about their child in any class are asked to **first contact the teacher. Teacher emails will be made available to parents.**

E-mails are not expected to be sent or replied to on weekends (Shabbat), and holidays (Jewish and Secular). If a situation cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both the parent and the teacher, the parent may schedule an appointment with the appropriate staff member to help resolve the issue. Click [here](#) for a link to contact information for various situations.

7. Bulletin Boards & E-Mail Communications

The school's bulletin boards, both physical and digital, are designed to display notices and information from the School. They may not be used to promote private businesses, the opinions of school parents or the community at large. All materials to be posted must first be initialled and approved by the Principal.

CASL prohibits the sending of a commercial electronic message to an electronic address unless the sender complies with specific requirements. By signing the required student information form that will be sent out at the beginning of the school year and accepting the terms of this Handbook, you agree to receive email communications from us for all purposes related to the school.

8. Permission to Publish

The Hamilton Hebrew Academy reserves the right to publish photographs, videos, and articles of students for school purposes, including online/social media. By agreeing to the terms of this Handbook, parents/guardians grant permission for the school to publish their child's image and name as described.

Parents who prefer that their child's image or name not be published should notify the School Office in writing. While the school will make every reasonable effort to honour such requests, absolute guarantees cannot be provided, particularly in group settings or situations where excluding a child from photos could affect their sense of inclusion and belonging.

V. Daily Routines

1. Office Hours

The School Office is open from Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. On Fridays with early dismissal (2:10), the school office will close at 2:30 p.m. Parents may call the school office to leave messages for their students. Unless urgent, these will be delivered to students at appropriate breaks in class, e.g, before recess or lunch.

2. Daily Schedule

Our Kindergarten to grade 8 classes begin promptly at 8:45 a.m. School ends for all classes at 3:45 p.m.

3. Arrival

School doors open at 8:30 a.m. and classes start promptly at 8:45 a.m. For all student drop-offs between 8:30-9:00 am, please use the new school entrance at 125 Cline Avenue South. After 9:00 am, please use the doors on Dow Avenue. **Please note that the school entrance on Dow Avenue will be closed from 8:30 to 9:00 am.** Please do not bring any children to the school campus, even outdoors, before 8:30 a.m. if they are not registered in Early Care.

4. Early Care

For students in Kindergarten to Grade 4 registered for Early Care, the doors will open at 8:00 a.m. For Early Care drop off, please use the doors on Dow Avenue. **Important: Please note that parents using either Early Care or Aftercare must complete a separate Extended Care Registration Form.**

5. Dismissal

The school day ends at 3:45 pm. For all student pick-ups between 3:30- 4:00 pm, please use the new school entrance at 125 Cline Avenue South. To ensure the safety of our students, parents with children in daycare up to Grade 4 are asked to park their cars on the street and come to pick up their child from the fenced area just outside the school entrance.

It is essential that parents pick up their children on time to ensure their safety and security. In the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, please notify the School Office so that your child can be brought to the School Office to await pickup. If, for any reason, you are not registered and need to use the Aftercare service, it will be based on student-to-teacher ratios to determine if we can accommodate you.

Our JK and SK students will be accompanied to the exit by their teachers, who will supervise them until their parents arrive. During the first few months, the Grade 1 students will be accompanied to the exit, where they will be met by their parents.

The School Office and Kindergarten teachers should be notified of all carpool and pick-up arrangements. Kindergarten staff will remain with their students until 3:55 pm. **At that time, students who have not yet been picked up will be taken to the Aftercare program. Charges will begin promptly at that time.**

6. Aftercare

Aftercare will take place from 3:45 to 5:30 pm for registered students. Students registered in aftercare should be picked up from the school entrance on Dow Avenue, which will be open from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. **Important: Please note that parents using either Early Care or Aftercare must complete a separate Extended Care Registration Form.**

7. Kindergarten Drop-Off Procedure

1. Upon arriving, please accompany your child to the designated kindergarten cubby area.
2. Please say goodbye and allow our staff to assist your child as they enter the classroom.
3. Parents are kindly asked to avoid entering the classroom during class time to minimize disruptions.

To support an effective learning environment, parents and guardians are requested to drop off their child promptly at the classroom door for the following reasons:

- **Foster Independence:** We encourage children to develop confidence by managing their own routines, which include entering the classroom, unpacking their belongings, and preparing for the day without parental assistance.
- **Minimize Disruption:** Parental presence in the classroom can create distractions, making it more challenging for students to settle into daily activities.
- **Ensure Safety and Security:** To maintain a safe environment, we limit the number of non-staff adults in classrooms during instructional time. This policy allows teachers to provide clear supervision and control over the learning environment.

We recognize that the first days of kindergarten can be emotional for both parents and children. Our goal is to provide a nurturing environment where students can develop independence and adapt to classroom routines with the support of their teachers. If your child requires additional emotional support during drop-off, please inform the teacher or administration in advance so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

7. Communication with our Kindergarten Teachers

For questions, concerns, or important information for your child's teacher, please use email, phone, or schedule a meeting. We kindly ask that you please refrain from conferencing with teachers during drop off and pick up times. This ensures that teachers can focus on their instructional responsibilities without interruption. Designated opportunities for parents to engage with their child's classroom will be available during special events, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences. These structured occasions are designed to keep students engaged while minimizing disruption to the school day.

9. Late Arrival

It is essential that students arrive on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the entire class, as well as to the individual child who misses the classroom start-up routines and the classwork that follows. Late arrival is noted on all academic term reports. When the number of unexcused late arrivals becomes excessive or detrimental to the student's success, parents will be contacted. Teachers will note the late arrival of the student and will communicate each week's attendance to the office.

10. Recess

There are three scheduled recess periods during the school day. These are intended for exercise, fresh air, and fun. It is important that students come to school properly dressed for outdoor play, especially during the winter

months. Unless students have a serious medical condition that prevents them from being outdoors, they will be expected to participate in outdoor recess. In the case of inclement weather conditions, a decision will be made for safety reasons to keep all the children indoors during recess times.

11. Absences

If your child is absent or will be absent from school, please inform the School Office by 8:50 a.m. by calling 905-528-0330 or e-mailing the school at school@hha.ca. It is the responsibility of an absent student, with parental support as appropriate, to complete all assigned homework and make up any work missed. Regular attendance is essential for successful scholastic development and progress.

It is strongly recommended that you keep your child home from school if they exhibit the following symptoms: fever, sore throat, pink eye, undiagnosed rashes, upset stomach, or nausea. We recommend that students with flu-like symptoms stay home for 24 hours after their fever or other major symptoms have ended without the use of medication. This will provide students with rest and time to heal properly, thereby avoiding the unintentional spread of illnesses throughout the school. In cases of suspected or diagnosed communicable diseases, parents should notify the School Office immediately.

Students are encouraged not to miss school days for family outings or vacations. Teachers are not required to provide make-up work or advance assignments for students who miss classes due to these absences. Students are responsible for all work, missed tests, etc.

11. Appointments

Parents are encouraged to schedule student appointments and lessons outside of school hours. When this is unavoidable, parents are asked to come to the school front door and wait for their child to be called from class. When students arrive at school due to an appointment or are leaving school before dismissal, they must be signed out in the School Office by a parent or guardian. Students are once again responsible for all work, missed tests, etc.

VI. Student Uniforms

Proper dress is an integral part of creating a culture of respect and dignity at school. Our school uniform plays a crucial role in our educational process and must be worn by students in Grades 1 through 8.

Uniforms are available for purchase through:

Bombardieri Uniforms
448 Barton Street East., Hamilton.
(905) 525-6684 | info@bombardieri.ca
www.bombardieri.ca

Three or more children living in the same household can receive a 20% discount on uniforms.

For uniforms purchased elsewhere, HHA logos can be sewn on at:

And Sew On
1080 Main St West; Hamilton
905-546-0198
www.andsewon.ca/en

Uniform skirts:

Uniform skirts are available for purchase from KLM and can be ordered online from the KLM website using the code **UNIFORM** for a 20% discount.

Families are welcome to purchase skirts from another vendor as long as they meet all of the uniform requirements.

[Click here for girl's sizing](#)

[Click here for women's sizing](#)

*For used/gently worn uniforms please reach out to Tziporah Tsaidi by text message at 289-700-6195

Bombardieri Uniforms

448 Barton Street East., Hamilton. (905) 525- 6684 info@bombardieri.ca www.bombardieri.ca. Three or more children living in the same household can receive a 20% discount on uniforms through in-store purchases, not online. Inquiries can be made at the School Office. Please note that some items (especially skirts) need to be ordered two weeks in advance, as the store does not carry full stock. Parents should have several uniforms for their children. When students arrive without the proper uniform, parents will be notified by the office.

Uniform Requirements:

- All students in grades 1-8 must wear uniform-designated tops (navy blue or white) with the HHA logo (See Daycare and JK and SK dress code under boys and girls)
- On cold days, students may choose to wear a navy blue uniform sweater.
- Students are expected to wear the school uniform on field trips, unless otherwise indicated by the school.

Boys:

- Boys must wear a kippah at all times. Baseball caps or any other hats are not acceptable attire in the classroom.
- During the months of September and June, boys in Grades 1-5, only, may wear uniform walking shorts (not school gym shorts).
- Boys are not permitted to wear earrings, visible neck jewelry, dye their hair, or wear nail polish.
- While we encourage and appreciate individuality, boys' hairstyles must be tidy and no more than one inch above the shoulders. Shaved patterns, designs, or writing in the hair are not permitted.
- Boys in Daycare, JK and SK may wear bottoms that are either pants or shorts. No costumes are allowed without school permission.

Girls:

- For safety, earrings should be small hoops or studs. Nose piercings are not permitted.
- Girls may not dye their hair a non-typical colour.
- Skirt lengths must reach mid-knee.
- During winter months, tights, knee socks (or leggings that fit like tights) may be worn. Leggings, socks, and tights must be white, navy, grey, blue, or black.
- Sweatpants or any other type of pants worn under skirts are not permitted. (See gym exception below.)
- Excessive makeup is not permitted.
- Girls in Daycare, JK and SK can wear pants, shorts or skirts. No costumes are allowed without school permission.

Gym:

- Only uniform shirts or school team jerseys are permitted.
- Sweatpants, or HHA uniform basketball shorts with a length entirely below the knee, are acceptable gym wear.
- Girls may wear pants under their skirts during gym class.
- Running shoes must be worn during gym classes and intramural activities.
- Uniform basketball shorts are acceptable gym wear. They may not be used as a substitute for school uniform pants.

Field Trip Dress Code (when school informs parents):

- Boys in Grades 1- 8 may wear either knee-length baggy shorts or sweatpants.
- Girls in Grades 1-8 may wear skirts but are also welcome to wear knee-length baggy shorts or sweatpants.

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- No sleeveless or low-cut tops, tight pants, or inappropriate t-shirt logos.

VII. School Supplies & Books

A list of school supplies required for each grade will be sent prior to the start of the school year and will be available on the hha.ca school website. It is expected that students will have the requested supplies for the first day of the school year. Supplies may need to be replenished throughout the year. Please note that a supply of kippot (boys) is an essential item on the supply list.

Each student is required to purchase a Student Success Kit for \$25. These will be on your child's desk on the first day of school. The Student Success Kit includes an accordion file folder, an agenda, dividers, and transparent page protectors. Please read the philosophy behind our Student Success Kit on the HHA website.

When textbooks are issued to students, it is the responsibility of each student to take proper care of the textbooks and return them in good shape. When textbooks are collected at the end of the school year, lost, misplaced, or damaged books will need to be reimbursed by parents.

VIII. Cellphones, Electronic Devices & Technology

The Hamilton Hebrew Academy is committed to fostering an environment that promotes the holistic development, well-being and growth of our students. In alignment with this commitment, we will be implementing a new cell phone policy to ensure that our school remains a space where students can thrive academically and socially. As described below, the policy provides that, subject to certain limited exceptions, students will no longer be able to bring mobile phones to school.

The policy is motivated by the following observations:

- **Developing a healthy community.** Over the last decade, we have observed a notable decline in the quality of students' face-to-face human interactions, which are critical to healthy adolescent and communal development. Students' ability to sustain an extended conversation, dive deeply into thoughts and ideas, and listen actively and empathetically to peers appears to have all been adversely impacted by the availability of phones.
- **Developing a healthy self.**¹ There is now an overwhelming amount of correlational evidence suggesting a toxic three-way relationship between social media, the developing adolescent brain, and the phone as a delivery mechanism for social media platforms. Teenage smartphone usage strongly coincides with an overwhelming increase in mental health challenges for adolescents. While ² it is difficult to find causal trends in social dynamics, recent studies have suggested a strong causal relationship between smartphone usage and teen mental health.³ At a minimum, our collective experience as educators suggests to us that adolescent life is being negatively altered by exposure to social media at a developmentally inappropriate time.
- **Developing digital citizenship.** Our approach in the years leading up to this decision has been to promote a healthy and self-restricting relationship with technology at school in the hope that our students will learn the appropriate times and places to interact with their phones. We have come to believe that this learning process requires a mandatory time period off of phones. Phones, in contrast to computers and tablets, provide a pervasive and effortless delivery system for products that are designed to develop addictive behaviour among users.⁴ In these circumstances, learning responsible use is best supported by fully removing the phone from the school environment, where socialization and learning are at their most critical moment.

● **A developing movement in education.** We are hardly alone in observing these troubling signs in adolescent development and in taking proactive steps to establish restricted technology environments at school. A number of Jewish high schools across North America have taken steps to limit or remove phones from school and there are a large number of completely device-free schools in Silicon Valley, where much of this technology is developed.⁶ In addition, the Ontario government is imposing mandatory requirements for all Ontario public schools effective September 2024 that will, among other things, prohibit students from using mobile phones during instructional periods or throughout the entire school day, depending on their age.⁷

We have adopted the following policy for phones, smart watches and video game consoles in school:

Students are no longer allowed to bring mobile phones/smart watches, video game consoles, or handheld gaming devices to school.

If a parent feels their child needs to bring their cell phone to school for specific reasons, they can submit a request by clicking [here](#). Approved mobile phones will be handed into the school office at the beginning of the day and placed in a secure lock box. Students can retrieve their devices from the office at the end of the day.

While in the school building, all students are prohibited from using a mobile phone/smart watch/gaming device or carrying a mobile phone/smart watch/gaming device on their person during school hours.

Personal Devices (Tablets, E-Readers, and Laptops)

Students are not permitted to bring their own personal devices (such as tablets or laptops) to school. The school provides Chromebooks for learning, which will now include an updated content filter to ensure safe and responsible use.

E-Readers

Students should not bring e-readers to school. In exceptional cases where an e-reader is a necessity, parents must request approval from the school administration prior to the student bringing it. Approved e-readers must remain put away during classroom time unless a teacher explicitly gives permission for their use.

IEP-Specific Devices

If a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires the use of a specific personal device, parents are asked to contact the school office directly to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are made.

This policy similarly applies to school excursions and extracurricular activities.

We recognize that this will be a significant change for some of our students, but believe this policy to be critically important and in the best interests of all of our students, including as it relates to their mental health, academic success, and personal accountability.

Please take the time to review this policy with your children. It is critical that we partner to effect this positive change towards our school culture.

References:

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 2. Abi-Jaoude, Elia et al. "Smartphones, social media use and youth mental health." CMAJ : Canadian Medical Association journal = journal de l'Association medicale canadienne vol. 192,6 (2020): E136-E141. doi:10.1503/cmaj.190434. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7012622.
 3. Lorenz-Spreen, Philipp, et al. "A Systematic Review of Worldwide Causal and Correlational Evidence on Digital Media and Democracy." SocArXiv, 22 Nov. 2021. <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/p3z9y>.
 4. See source 2.
 5. Avishur, Maccabee. "Yeshiva High Schools Join Together to Limit Student Cell Phone Use: Parents Can Help." Jewish Link, 25 Aug. 2022. jewishlink.news/features/53166-yeshiva-high-schools-join-together-to-limit-student-cell-phone-use-parents-can-help.
 6. Richtel, Matt. "A Silicon Valley School That Doesn't Compute." The New York Times, 22 Oct. 2011. www.nytimes.com/2011/10/23/technology/at-waldorf-school-in-silicon-valley-technology-can-wait.html.
 7. The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct. Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128, April 28, 2024. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-128>

IX. School Safety and Security

1. Visitors to the School

All visitors to the school must first contact the School Office.

2. Reporting a Child in Need of Protection

The School is duty-bound to report to the Children's Aid Society. In cases where there is a suspicion that a child has; suffered physical harm, been sexually molested or exploited, requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-destructive or aggressive behaviour or been abandoned, the Ministry of Education guidelines state, "It is the responsibility of the children's aid society, and if necessary, the police, to conduct an investigation into the possibility that a child is in need of protection. School personnel who suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection should not conduct an investigation regarding their suspicions or disclosures of the child, and shall question the child only to clarify the nature of the complaint." This process applies even if the information reported is confidential or privileged. (See HHA Procedure Manual For Abuse & Maltreatment Reporting)

3. School Closure

a) Daycare, Kindergarten & Elementary School - Inclement Weather Closure Policy

School closures due to inclement weather will be in effect when BOTH the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and Catholic District School Board close, or when factors such as staffing constraints force us to close. School closures will be communicated directly to parents via email and Whatsapp groups by 7:00 am.

b) Bus Cancellations

HHA transportation cancellations will occur whenever the school is closed. In addition to HHA closures, the school monitors weather conditions along all bus routes and when school boards in surrounding areas close (such as Niagara, Guelph, and Burlington), HHA transportation will also be cancelled, even when Hamilton Boards remain open. Please note that our goal is to ensure everyone's safety on the roads. As a

result, there may be times when transportation is cancelled, while schools remain open. Parents will be notified of any cancellations by email and text by 7:00 am.

c) Daycare & Kindergarten & Elementary School - Emergency Closures

Throughout the years, there have been very few incidents where we have had to close the school due to an emergency or staff shortages. While we hope not to have such incidents, please review our emergency closure policy and procedures below.

In the event of a staff shortage, and all efforts to find coverage are unsuccessful, classroom and/or school/daycare closures will be communicated to parents via email and Whatsapp groups. In such circumstances, the school may remain partially open for classes that are fully staffed.

During school hours if an emergency closure due to inclement weather, or other sudden in-school urgency arises, parents will be notified and students will remain at the HHA, allowing a one-hour window for parents to pick up their children. In the event of an emergency evacuation, all daycare children will be taken to 100 Cline Ave South, and kindergarten and elementary students will be taken to 124 Cline Ave South.

4. First Aid

When administering first aid or addressing a medical concern, the school will not provide or administer over-the-counter or prescription pain relief medication. A student requiring medication (over the counter or prescription), during school hours must have a written permission form and instructions signed by the parent before the medication will be dispensed by the School Office.

In cases of emergency, the student will be brought to the nearest hospital or urgent care centre, and the parent will be contacted immediately. For this purpose, an up-to-date 'Student Information Form' must be signed and filed with the School Office. It is the responsibility of each parent to fill out and return this form within the first two weeks of school.

Parents are required to notify the School of any allergies or other medical conditions by completing the medical form. On this form, parents will provide instructions for managing these conditions, should they become necessary. Students with asthma, who carry a rescue inhaler, should also provide a duplicate to the School Office.

5. Head Lice

Head lice, also known as pediculosis, are easily passed on to others and require immediate treatment. Parents can help to limit the potential problem of head lice by checking their children's hair regularly. Periodic checks by a qualified professional will take place 2 times a year. Parents should report any case of lice they discover to the school office. The following procedure is followed once it has been confirmed that a student has lice. If a case of lice is confirmed in the school, the child will be sent discreetly back to class. An e-mail or note is sent to the whole class, as well as sibling classes, notifying the parents of a confirmed case of lice.

Parents are contacted and must pick up the child from school. Any student who has a confirmed case of lice must bring a note from a doctor or a Lice Professional that they have been effectively treated, in order for your child to be admitted back to school

6. Vaccinations

All students at the HHA must be up to date on their vaccinations required by Public Health. Parents are responsible for submitting their updated vaccinations to Public Health. Students who are not up to date on their vaccinations, according to school or Public Health policies, will not be permitted to attend.

Exemptions: If your child is not yet immunized against all required diseases, there are specific situations in which they may still be permitted to attend school.

- **In Process:** Some vaccine doses need to be taken at specific time intervals. Students may be allowed to attend school during the waiting period.

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- **Medical Exemptions:** Specific health conditions where a vaccine may be harmful. Parents must provide a medical exemption form from a doctor.

No religious or conscience exemptions from mandated vaccinations will be granted.

7. Epi-Pens

Adrenaline (epinephrine) is the commonly prescribed treatment for an anaphylactic response. Adrenaline is commonly contained in an 'auto-injector' instrument known as an Epi-Pen. An Epi-Pen is the anaphylactic child's lifesaver, and can be administered by any responsible adult when needed. All staff will receive a list of all the students in the school who carry and require an Epi-Pen.

For preschool students who require EpiPens, these will be stored in a secure and easily accessible location in the classroom under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher will carry the Epi-Pen during outdoor play. For Grades 1-8, students requiring EpiPens must carry at least one EpiPen with them at all times and show their teacher where it is stored. A second Epi-Pen must be kept in the School Office with an anaphylaxis action plan. Parents must ensure that their anaphylactic children are aware of the Epi-Pen's requirements and that the Epi-Pens have not passed their expiration date.

8. Fire Drill and Lockdown Procedure

Fire drills, in accordance with government policy and regulations, are conducted regularly to ensure that students are familiar with exit procedures and safety precautions in the event of a building evacuation. Lockdown drills will also be conducted, in cooperation with the Hamilton Police, in keeping with current government-mandated practices.

9. Field Trips

Trips outside the classroom expand children's learning through active, hands-on experiences and are strongly encouraged by the school administration. For students to attend school outings, a signed permission form must be submitted to the School Office prior to departure. Telephone permissions will not be acceptable.

X. Assisting Student Progress

1. Organizational Platforms: Google Classroom & Student Agendas

Student Agendas are important daily communication tools. Students in Grades 5-8 will also use Google Classroom, an online communication tool, to support their executive functioning skills. Organizational Platforms encourage responsibility and decision-making skills via daily and weekly prioritization of homework assignments. Used effectively, agendas can help promote effective study habits, time management, and organizational skills. Additionally, these platforms serve as an excellent tool for homeschool communication. In Grades 1-4, parents are encouraged to use the Agenda to communicate with teachers. As part of the Student Success Kit philosophy, the Agenda will be sent home every day and must come back to school the following day.

2. Written Reports of Student Progress (JK-8)

Written reports of Student progress are provided three times throughout the school year: November, February and June.

3. Achievement Tests

Schoolwide standardized achievement tests are administered *annually*. Additionally, various tests help benchmark our students' achievements and growth against national Canadian norms. These measurements provide a very useful indicator of ability, growth, and development. The results are stored as part of the OSR and are available for parent review upon request.

XI. Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. It is our policy that each individual teacher assign homework in accordance with the specific needs of the student and the class. Teachers are well aware of the double programme carried out by our students and assign homework accordingly.

Homework may consist of reinforcement, creative work, and/or investigative work. Learning is an ongoing process that does not only take place at school. Homework or work that is not completed in class during the allotted time is important in helping students provide better accountability for their work.

All homework assigned in Judaic and General Studies is intended to be done with minimal assistance from parents. Students who are unable to complete their homework due to specific difficulties should consult with their individual teachers for assistance. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teachers if they are having difficulty completing homework assignments or are spending an excessive amount of time on them. Communication between the family and school is of the utmost importance.

The following tips may be helpful to parents:

- Encourage your child to complete their homework independently.
- Helping your child find a comfortable workspace and providing them with everything necessary to succeed.
- Encourage your child to check their accordion folder, which contains their agenda for the next day's homework and any upcoming homework assignments or projects.

XII. Inclusivity, Dietary Restrictions & Kashrut

The HHA is a school and community that values and models a message of inclusion. This core ideal is expected to be exemplified not only by the school but also by families and staff outside of school as well.

To that end, all birthday parties and gatherings for students must include all students in the class or all students of the same gender. The food at the party should be Kosher, to cater to the needs of all children. Parents should also be mindful of any food allergies.

At school, we recognize the dietary restrictions of all of our students and strive to deliver food programs in an equitable way. Some of our students have specific dietary requirements. These may be in the form of allergies, lactose intolerance, gluten intolerance, etc. If your child has any such issues, please inform their teachers and assist us in providing suitable substitutes when appropriate. Proper communication on all sides will be necessary for such instances. We will strive to accommodate these situations with universal food choices that all students can share equally.

At the HHA, only Chalav Yisrael dairy products are served to students or at school functions. All food provided by the school, or by parents to be served at school, must be Kosher and Chalav Yisrael. Pareve foods (non-dairy) are always fine, and many appropriate items can be found in the Fortinos kosher aisle.

The HHA is a nut-sensitive facility. This policy is reviewed annually based on the specific needs of our students.

While we recognize that not all families & teachers in our school adhere to the laws of kashrut in their homes, it is important that we all respect kashrut and its observance in our facility. Please review and respect the following guidelines:

- Lunch and snacks 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). The HHA is a meat and poultry-free environment to avoid confusion for students and staff.
- Staff members will ensure students do not share food.
- No food items identifiable to the public as non-kosher (ie, food wrapped in fast food packaging) may be brought by students.
- When teachers serve food (Shabbat party, etc.), the teacher must wash their hands.

The HHA recognizes the importance of fostering healthy nutrition and supporting the wellness of our students and staff. Proper nutritional choices are essential for the optimal growth and development of children. Well-nourished children are more likely to be prepared to learn, be active, and maintain their health as adults.

1. School Lunch Programme

2. Class Parties

Teachers reserve the right to serve students food or beverages, provided that those food items comply with nutrition standards that foster healthy nutrition and wellness. Such choices include fruits, vegetables, low-salt, and low-fat snacks, frozen yogurt, fruit juices, milk, and water. At various class milestone events, teachers will be given

the discretion to serve food with higher sugar and fat content (cake, ice cream, candy, slushies, etc.) provided that this does not exceed two times per class per semester. If you are asked to bring an item to be served, at a teacher's request, please ensure that the food meets those requirements so that no child is excluded. Please ensure that the food is Kosher, Chalav Yisrael, and is sensitive to any food allergies in that class. If you have additional questions in these areas, please consult with a Judaic Studies staff member.

3. Holiday, Birthday and Shabbat Celebrations

Shabbat and Jewish holidays are accompanied by their own traditions. Our students in Nursery, JK, SK & Grade 1 receive challah and grape juice as part of the weekly Kabbalat Shabbat program. Some holiday celebrations will be accompanied by traditional foods that fit the occasion, which may not conform to the nutrition standards detailed above. In addition, students in all grades may receive a small Shabbat treat from the school office in anticipation of Shabbat. When serving food, teachers are required to wear gloves. For Daycare and Kindergarten students, when celebrating a birthday, teachers will provide a list of acceptable items. These snacks can be served in addition to the cupcakes purchased through the office.

4. Special School Events

The HHA recognizes that special event days take place periodically throughout the year. Although the school is encouraged to follow the nutrition policy in all circumstances, on such designated days, the Principal will have the discretion to decide whether to serve or sell foods that do not comply with the standards.

5. Allergies

Please refer to our School Policy on Allergy and Anaphylaxis.

6. Healthy Snack List

Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and helping to prevent costly and potentially disabling diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. Snacks play a major and growing role in children's diets. Below are ideas for teachers and parents for serving healthy snacks and beverages to children in the classroom.

7. Fruits and Vegetables

Most of the snacks served to children should be fruits and vegetables, since most kids do not eat the recommended five to thirteen servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eating fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure. Fruits and vegetables also contain important nutrients like vitamins A and C and fibre. Fruit is naturally sweet, so most kids love it. Fruit can be served whole, sliced, cut in half, cubed, or in wedges. Canned, frozen, and dried fruits often need little preparation. Fruits and vegetables can also be served with dips such as yogurt.

Suggested Fruits Options:

- Apples (instant apple corers are great)
- Applesauce (Unsweetened),
- Apricots
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Cantaloupe
- Carrot sticks or Baby Carrots
- Celery Sticks
- Cherries
- Cucumber
- Dried Fruit
- Frozen Fruit (try freezing grapes or buy frozen blueberries, strawberries, peaches, mangoes etc)
- Fruit Cups and Canned Fruit
- Fruit Leathers
- Grapefruit
- Grapes (red, green, or purple)
- Honeydew Melon
- Mandarin Oranges
- Mangoes
- Nectarines
- Oranges
- Papaya
- Peaches
- Pears
- Peppers (green, red, or yellow)
- Pineapple
- Plums

- Smoothies (Blend fruit with juice, yogurt or milk, and ice)
- Snap Peas
- Snow Peas
- Strawberries
- String Beans

- Tangerines
- Tomato slices or grape or cherry tomatoes
- Watermelon
- Yellow Summer Squash

Low-Fat Dairy Foods

- Dairy foods are a great source of calcium, which can help to build strong bones. Some examples are:
- Low-Fat Cheese
- Low-Fat Pudding and Frozen Yogurt (should be used as desserts or treats)
- Frozen Yogurt
- Yogurt cups

Healthy Grains (bread, crackers, cereals, etc.)

Try to serve your child mostly whole grains, which provide more fibre, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. Try cheese or a spread such as hummus on a wedge of focaccia or toast in a grill pan. For a sweet touch, children might like toasted cream cheese on cinnamon raisin sandwich bread or a bun. Several stores now carry kosher specialty bread such as focaccia. Children often want to explore different shapes and tastes, so experiment with different types of bread, such as rolls and pitas in order to discover what they prefer.

Suggested Grain Options:

- Whole-grain crackers like Triscuits, which come in different flavors or thin crisps (or similar woven wheat crackers), whole wheat
- Matzos can be served alone or with toppings.
- Rice Cakes
- Cereals like Cheerios, Grape-Nuts, Raisin Bran, and Wheaties make good snacks.
- Look for cereals with no more than 35% added sugars by weight (or roughly 8 grams of sugar per serving)
- Popcorn (Look for low-fat popcorn in a bag or microwave popcorn. Or you can air pop the popcorn)
- Baked Tortilla Chips (Baked tortilla chips are usually low in fat, and taste great with salsa and/or bean dip. Look for brands with less sodium.)
- Granola and Cereal Bars
- Look for whole-grain granola bars that are low in fat and sugars
- Pretzels, Breadsticks, and Flatbreads

Healthy Beverages

- Water (always the best!!)
- Seltzer
- Carbonated drinks, such as seltzer, sparkling water, and club soda, are considered healthy options. They do not contain the sugars, calories, and caffeine found in sodas. Serve them alone or try

making “healthy sodas” by mixing them with equal amounts of 100% fruit juice.

- Low-Fat and Fat-Free Milk
- Soy and Rice Drinks For children who prefer not to drink cow’s milk, calcium-fortified soy and rice drinks are good choices.
- Fruit Juice - Try to buy 100% fruit juice.

Other Ideas

- Dips (Try low-fat salad dressings, bean dips, guacamole, hummus, or salsa. For those with a sweet tooth, try honey!)
- Salad (Make a salad or set out veggies like a salad bar and let the kids build their own salads)

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- Veggie Pockets (Cut whole wheat pitas in half and let kids add veggies with dressing or hummus)

XV. Additional Policies, Documents & Resources

A list of additional policies, important documents, and resources that are to be considered a part of this Handbook can be found online at www.hha.ca under the “About Us” and “School Policies”

Please also familiarize yourself with these policies:

- HHA Daycare Handbook
- HHA Code of Conduct, Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy
- HHA Procedure Manual for Abuse & Maltreatment Reporting
- HHA School Supplies and Student Success Kit

Conclusion

While no handbook can anticipate every situation that may arise in the vibrant life of a school, we hope this guide offers clarity and insight into the shared values and expectations that shape our community. Rooted in our Jewish tradition and a deep commitment to each child’s well-being, this handbook reflects the spirit of partnership that defines our school. We look forward to a year filled with growth, discovery, and joy, and we are honoured to share this journey with you and your wonderful child as we build a warm, respectful, and inspiring school culture together.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Yaakov Morel, Principal