

# Parent Handbook

## 2017-2018

5778

## School Year



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*Beneficiary of **Hamilton Jewish Federation***

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***Beth Jacob Synagogue and Temple Anshe Sholom***

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Kehila Jewish Community Day School. We are delighted to have you as a member of our school community. We are committed to providing a high quality education in a stimulating Jewish environment.

## **KEHILA**

Kehila means *community* in Hebrew. Kehila is a Jewish day school that welcomes students from all streams of Judaism. As an Ontario Private School we use ministry curriculum guidelines as a basis for our curriculum and enrich our program above and beyond their expectations.

## **Mission**

Kehila Jewish Community Day School cultivates academic excellence and a strong Jewish identity. We foster an environment that is socially, emotionally and academically tailored to advance students' individual talents. We integrate Jewish teachings throughout our curriculum, embracing all streams of Judaism.

## **Vision**

Kehila Jewish Community Day School advances academic excellence by:

- integrating experiential learning, computer technology, artistic expression, and global responsibility
- promoting professional development and educational innovation
- providing trilingual instruction
- ensuring small class sizes

Kehila builds a foundation for a lifelong capacity in critical thinking, ethical behaviour and independent achievement. Our school teaches students Jewish customs, religion, Hebrew language, and a love for Israel. These skills, ideas and values help our graduates excel as productive members of society and active participants in Jewish life.

## **OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL**

### **School Hours**

(Daylight Saving Time) 8:40 am - 3:45 pm Mondays to Fridays

(Eastern Standard Time) 8:40 am – 3:45 pm Mondays to Thursdays and  
Fridays 8:45 am – 3:00 pm.

3:00 pm dismissal on Fridays, during Eastern Standard Time is in honour of Shabbat.

Please check your monthly calendar for dismissal times on other holidays.

Kehila works on a Balanced Day schedule. Please see below for more information regarding 'recess' and nutrition breaks.

### **Attendance:**

Regular and prompt attendance is essential for academic progress and achievement. Please assist us by scheduling vacations, medical appointments etc. outside school hours. If you do need to pick up your child for an appointment during the school day, **please come to the office first to sign your child/ren out and for the staff person to withdraw the student from the class.**

### **Tardiness and Absences:**

Students arriving late (after 8:40 am) will first check in with the office to be signed in to school before going to the sanctuary or into their classroom.

If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, please notify the office. Arrangements can be made to pick up class work.

### **School Office:**

The school office will be open from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm Monday – Friday.

### **Inclement Weather:**

In case of inclement weather causing a school closure, emails will be sent to all parents, a message will be left on the school's answering system and an announcement will also be relayed via CHML (radio -900 AM) and CHCH TV.

Please understand that decisions have to be made at 6:30 am and will be based on the conditions at that time. In some circumstances school may be delayed by an hour.

### **Pick-up and Drop-Off:**

When dropping off or picking up your child, please try to avoid blocking neighbours' driveways and teacher/office staff parking space at any time. Drop-off will be at the **classroom door**. **To speed up the dismissal process, students will be picked up by their parents in the Kehila foyer**. Monday through Friday, **drop-off is 8:30-8:40 am** and **pick-up is at 3:45 pm**. If you need to pick-up or drop-off your child outside of these times, **please report to the office first**. **Please do not interrupt the classroom**.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING PICKED UP BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF, THEIR CARETAKER OR THE PEOPLE LISTED ON THE SCHOOL'S CHILD RELEASE FORM, PLEASE NOTIFY THE OFFICE. THEY WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANOTHER PERSON EVEN IF YOUR CHILD KNOWS THAT PERSON.** You may give the office a list of people who might potentially pick up your child.

### **Extended care**

Kehila will be offering morning **extended care** from 8:00-8:30 am. Afternoon extended care will be supervised privately. Details available from the office.

Students who are not picked up by 3:45 pm (Monday through Friday) will be brought to extended care at your cost. **Note that there is no extended care on any special early dismissal days unless organized privately and within the guidelines of holiday observances.**

### **"THE BALANCED DAY"**

Kehila Board of Directors and School administration are pleased to announce that Kehila will continue to use a 'Balanced School Day' Schedule **during the 2017 - 2018** school year.

### **What is a balanced day and how will it affect our students and program?**

The Balanced School Day at Kehila involves dividing the instructional day into three blocks of teaching/learning time, separated by two 40 minute physical activity and nutrition breaks. The Balanced School Day does not affect the start and ending school times. Schools who are on a Balanced School Day schedule report the following:

- Larger uninterrupted learning blocks.
- An increase in students' concentration and energy levels.
- More time for students to relax and enjoy their lunches as time is set aside specifically for eating during the two breaks.
- More time for daily physical activity/play.

### What does the Balanced Day Kehila schedule look like?

#### DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

September 5 – November 5  
March 11 - Last day of school

8:30-8:40	School Entry
8:40-9:20	Period 1
9:20-10:00	Period 2
10:00-10:20	T'fillah
10:20-10:40	Nutrition Break
10:40-11:00	Recess
11:00-11:40	Period 3
11:40-12:20	Period 4
12:20-1:00	Period 5
1:00-1:20	Nutrition Break
1:20-1:40	Recess
1:40-2:20	Period 6
2:20-3:00	Period 7
3:00-3:40	Period 8
3:40 -3:45	School Dismissal

#### EASTERN STANDARD TIME

Fridays November 10 - Friday March 9

8:30-8:40	School Entry
8:40-9:20	Period 1
9:20-10:00	Period 2
10:00-10:20	Kabbalat Shabbat
10:20-10:40	Nutrition Break
10:40-11:00	Recess
11:00-11:40	Period 3
11:40-12:20	Period 4
12:20-1:00	Period 5
1:00-1:20	Nutrition Break
1:20-1:40	Recess
1:40- 2:20	Period 6
2:20-3:00	Period 7
3:00	School Dismissal

Parents are requested to pack as "litterlessly" as possible, using recyclable containers whenever possible. The school follows kashrut policy. **Please pack dairy or parve lunches (i.e. no meat or meat products).**

#### Kosher Food Policy:

All **shared** foods must be:

- ★ sealed & packaged with a kosher symbol; or
- ★ prepared at school
- ★ no home baked goods

#### No Nut Policy:

Out of consideration for the safety of students or staff member with a nut allergy, please avoid sending any foods containing nuts

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

For girls: Navy blue or white blouse, or turtleneck WITH KEHILA LOGO  
Navy blue or white pullover or sweatshirt WITH KEHILA LOGO  
Navy blue skirt, jumper or pants-no jeans or logos  
***(no leggings unless worn under skirt/jumper/dress)***  
Solid Navy Blue Trackpants or shorts- no stripes or logos with a KEHILA  
T-shirt for gym

For boys: Navy blue or white collared golf shirt or turtleneck WITH KEHILA LOGO  
Navy blue pullover or sweatshirt with WITH KEHILA LOGO  
Solid Navy blue pants –NO JEANS or pants with stripes or logo  
Solid Navy Blue Trackpants or shorts- no stripes or logos with a KEHILA  
T-shirt for gym

Gym: ***Running Shoes must be worn to participate in all gym activities***  
***Crocs and flip-flops are not appropriate***

All pieces should be purchased through Bombardieri Uniforms at  
448 Barton Street East, Hamilton, ON. Phone 905-525-6684.  
Email [info@bombardieri.ca](mailto:info@bombardieri.ca) Website [www.bombardieri.ca](http://www.bombardieri.ca)

**In warm weather**, students may wear navy shorts but must wear a T-shirt with a Kehila logo.

**In winter**, all children should wear full **snowsuits (coat and pants), hats and gloves/mittens and boots, as they will be going outside during recess.**

All articles of clothing should be marked by either a marker pen or with name tapes, to ensure they can be claimed in case of loss.

### **Head Coverings:**

All boys are expected to wear ***their own labeled kippah*** daily during all school activities. It is optional for girls to wear a kippah.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **School Supplies:**

Students are expected to provide those school supplies, as per a list compiled by the teachers and posted on the school website. All necessary text books and selected materials will be provided by the school. Please see Kehila website for the whole list of supplies under “current families”.

### **Bursaries**

Kehila believes that no child should be denied a Jewish education because of financial impediments. Bursaries are available and are allocated according to objective criteria set and implemented by the Bursary Committee. Applicants for bursaries are invited to submit the bursary application form (on the Kehila website) through the office to the Bursary Committee at the time of re-enrollment. All information related to bursary applications is strictly confidential.

### **Fundraising:**

Fundraising is an essential undertaking which extends throughout the school year. **All parents are asked to assist in any fundraising.** A 'Fundraising Events Committee' will meet early in the school year to create the event calendar (meeting date and time will be announced in advance in the newsletter).

### **Donations:**

Kehila welcomes donations for the purpose of ordering classroom supplies, computer equipment (hardware and software), art supplies and books for the School Library as well as contributions to the school's capital fund. Tax receipts will be provided.

## **HEALTH**

**Medications:** School policy is to administer **prescription medications** only in their original container. If your child requires medication during the school day, you will need to sign a letter of authorization, which includes information by a physician if prescription drugs are to be administered, regarding the administration of the medication. Please obtain a form from the office. The medication should be brought to and picked up from the office daily, unless other arrangements have been made with the Kehila Office.

### **Accidents or Unexpected Illness during the school day:**

In the event of any accident or if your child is taken ill during the school day every effort will be made to contact you or your identified representative. If in the opinion of school staff urgent treatment is required, an ambulance will be called at your expense and your child will be taken to the Emergency Room at Hamilton Health Science Corporation-McMaster Site. A signed consent form covering this situation is included in the Registration Package.

### **Sickness:**

Out of fairness to all our students, we ask you to keep your child at home if he or she has a condition which may be contagious. Please notify the school of any communicable diseases such as chicken pox, measles etc.

### **Allergies:**

Information on any child who has an allergy should be included on the health form. If your child may need to use an EPIPEN at any time, one should be kept on the school premises in a fanny pack at all times.

**Lice:** Please notify the school when detected and keep your child at home until treated.

## **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

### **General Communication:**

Please check your child's file (in hallway) or backpacks on a daily basis. Also, please check your email **daily** for messages and announcements.

### **Agendas:**

This tool will be used **daily** to communicate homework, due dates and messages. Please check and initial daily so that your child's teacher will know that you have seen and followed up on the note.

### **Communications With Teachers:**

Parents are encouraged to keep regular contact with the teachers. This can be through written notes, personal meetings, telephone and by email.

### **What if a Parent Has a Concern:**

There may be times when classroom issues arise that are of concern to parents. When this occurs, the first step should be for the teacher to be contacted so that the issue can be presented and answers received. If this does not result in an acceptable response, the parent could then approach the education committee for his or her follow-up. If after this second step is taken, there is still no resolution, the parent may wish to notify the board of directors of the concern. The concern will be investigated further to recommend a course of action to be taken. This process is included as a part of the **Kehila Progressive Discipline Policy**. (Posted on Kehila's website)

### **Report Cards:**

Report cards will be issued three times a year and will conform to provincial standards. The report cards will be handed directly to a parent or other adult, as prearranged by a parent, through the school office. Parent-teacher conferences will follow report cards in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> terms. Parents may request a conference at any time during the year.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN KEHILA**

Kehila encourages parents to play an active role in the school, or on the Board of Directors, volunteering at school events, to supervising lunches, or accompanying students on school trips.

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

The school and its staff work 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 when not invited to a party. We ask that you help your child to be sensitive to the feelings of others and to plan their parties accordingly.

For birthdays that are being celebrated at home, we ask that invitations are sent by mail or made by phone, rather than distributed in school. Invitations will not be distributed at school unless the whole class is invited.

**It is our hope that families will observe kashrut and Shabbat when planning parties so as not to exclude any child from attending.**

## **KEHILA'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES**

The School's Board members include parents, school staff and others from our community. The Board meets monthly and has various sub-committees including education, finance, public and community relations, fundraising and parent volunteers.

### **Homework Policy**

Homework is defined as any work or task planned by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without immediate and direct teacher or parent interaction (unless specified). Homework allows students to integrate the academic learning process into their daily lives. At Kehila, homework is also viewed as an opportunity to have students develop ownership for their own learning.

The purpose of homework at Kehila:

- *Reinforcement of skills learned in class*
- *Revisiting and reviewing of material previously taught for consolidation and connection*
- *Linking skills together through integrated assignments*
- *Mastery of basic skills*
- *Ongoing development of organizational and long-term planning skills*

Homework will not be assigned on Jewish Holidays or on Shabbat.

### **Homework Procedures and Guidelines**

- Daily assignments will be written in the agenda for ALL grade 1-5 students.
- Parents of students in grades 1 to 5 should initial the student planner daily. This will let the teacher know that you have seen the assignment and have followed up with your child.
- Students will correct homework errors and follow-up to insure understanding in a timely fashion. Teachers will take a proactive role in this area.
- Daily homework is given in math and reading where mastery of ongoing skills is necessary.
- For most other subjects, assignments are not due the next day; thus, dividing the assignment into manageable parts is highly suggested.
- Emails to parents will be sent home when assignments are not completed or turned in on time. No response from the parents/guardians is needed. Students are still required to finish incomplete assignments.
- **Suggested** Time Guidelines – dependent on the individual students' abilities and the amount of work to be completed.

1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade:	10 to 30 minutes daily
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade:	15 to 30 minutes daily
4 <sup>th</sup> grade:	30 to 45 minutes daily
5 <sup>th</sup> grade:	30 to 45 minutes daily



## **Homework Roles and Responsibilities**

**Teachers** help students establish a routine of regular, independent study by:

- Clearly communicating the purpose, benefits, and expectation of all homework.
- Coordinating homework with other team members to avoid overloading children with work.
- Using homework that is purposeful, challenging, and directly related to class work and appropriate to students' learning needs.

**Students** take ownership of their own learning by:

- Accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames,
- Seeking assistance when difficulties arise.
- Organizing their time to manage home obligations, participation in physical activity and sports and recreational and cultural activities.

**Parents/Guardians** can help with their child by:

- Allowing students to work independently, but being available to answer questions or assist with directions.
- Dividing homework into shorter time periods with frequent breaks, if this works better for the student and assisting the child with portioning long-term assignments into manageable chunks.
- Creating a home schedule that includes dedicating time for homework every day.

## **Physical Education:**

Phys Ed activities will be held in the school or in Churchill Park (behind the school). Other special activities such as swimming, dancing and skating may be arranged throughout the year.

## **T'FILOT (PRAYERS)**

T'filot take place every day. Boys and girls pray together and share responsibilities for conducting rituals.

## **Chagim (Holidays):**

All the Jewish holidays will be celebrated as a part of the school program. Please refer to the school calendar for details. Halloween and Valentine's Day are **NOT** observed

## **Observing Shabbat:**

Even if you do not personally observe Shabbat please do not email, phone or post any Kehila messages/photo's etc. during this time. We are a school embracing all forms of Judaism and encourage inclusivity.