



HEBREW ACADEMY
RABBI ALEXANDER S. GROSS
ETERNAL WISDOM FOR A CHANGING WORLD

EARLY CHILDHOOD HANDBOOK

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Educational Administration

EARLY CHILDHOOD

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NAEYC

Congratulations, parents!

You have chosen an early childhood program for your child that is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. The Academy is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators.

What is accreditation?

Early childhood programs accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Academy's criteria for high quality early childhood programs, and have been found to be in substantial compliance with the criteria.



What is a high quality early childhood program?

A high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

In accredited programs, you will see:

- * Frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- * Planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development
- * Specially trained teachers
- * Enough adults to respond to individual children
- * Varied age-appropriate materials
- * A healthy and safe environment for children
- * Nutritious meals and/or snacks
- * Regular communication with parents
- * Effective administration
- * Ongoing, systematic evaluation and feedback to parents

The Early Childhood department is proud to be the first Orthodox day school in Southern Florida to have earned the prestigious accreditation of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a distinction we have held since 1989. We are also the recipients of the Florida Gold Seal of Excellence. This is a reflection of our high standards and the quality of our program and staff. We employ a dedicated, caring educational staff who strive to meet the needs of individual children as they guide and assist our young students in their personal process of discovery, development and learning. Our low teacher-child ratio, which varies by age group according to the guidelines of the State of Florida, as well as NAEYC, creates a warm and nurturing environment in which our children can safely explore, experiment and grow.

The Hebrew Academy EC Program offers a process-oriented, hands-on approach to learning. Developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials allow each child to work according to his/her ability or skill level. Based on learning theories and the current brain-based research, children learn through direct interaction with their environment, one in which there is a natural integration of Torah and general studies in conjunction with an introduction to basic skills in reading, language arts and math. Active participation in various mitzvot internalizes a love and respect for the Torah and its inherent values. Life cycle events and Shabbat and holiday celebrations develop within our children an identification with a sense of responsibility to the school community, Klal Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael.

We encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education. Our goal is for parents and teachers to work in a partnership to evaluate, appreciate and improve upon our outstanding program.

ADMISSIONS

The Hebrew Academy accepts applications for admissions for children ages three months through grade twelve. Families seeking admissions must first interview with the Director of Admissions. Children ages three and older must also sit for placement testing.

INCLUSION

The Hebrew Academy joyfully includes children of all abilities including those with special or developmental needs when appropriate. Working as a team, parents, teachers, administrators, the admissions director, and private therapists determine if placement in the Hebrew Academy Early Childhood program is suitable. Upon acceptance an individual education plan is created for the student.

STAFF

Our teachers are licensed and experienced in Early Childhood Education. Our personnel meet the standards of NAEYC as well as those of the Florida Department of Children and Families. Many of our staff have advanced degrees and years of valuable experience working with young children.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Playgroup	(1/2 day)	8:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Playgroup	(full day)	8:00 - 3:45 p.m.
Nursery	(1/2 day)	8:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Nursery	(full day)	8:00 - 3:45 p.m.
Pre-Kindergarten		8:00 - 3:45 p.m.

FRIDAY DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

Playgroup	(1/2 day)	12:00 p.m. dismissal
Nursery	(1/2 day)	12:00 p.m. dismissal
Full Day Classes		2:30 p.m. dismissal

LATE PICK-UP

In the event that a student is not picked up by 4:10 p.m. on weekdays and 2:45 p.m. on Fridays, the parent will be BILLED \$5.00 PER 15 MINUTES THEREAFTER. Students left after pick up time will be placed in a classroom until parents pick them up. Please note that the Academy is not responsible for the safety of children/students after the hours of 4:10 p.m. Monday-Thursday and after 2:45 p.m. on Fridays. You can arrange in advance for your child to stay later than 12:30 p.m. on an occasional basis, provided there is classroom space. All requests for additional hours must be cleared/arranged and paid for with the administrative office prior to leaving your child.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD

In accordance with state law, we must have on file the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the individuals permitted to drop off and collect your child(ren) from our school. If someone arrives to pick up your child(ren) whose name is not in our file, we CANNOT allow your child to leave with them. Filling out the authorization pick-up form will help ensure the safety of our students and avoid any possible embarrassment or inconvenience.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please bring your child on time so that he/she can begin the day with everyone else in a happy and relaxed manner. Class begins at 8:00 a.m. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. It can be very upsetting to a child whose parent is late picking him/her up. Last minute changes of schedule for going home are often difficult to arrange. Please let your child know in the morning if there is a change and SEND A DATED NOTE TO THE TEACHERS TO INFORM THEM OF SUCH CHANGES.

EARLY ARRIVALS

Early A.M. child care for early childhood children will be provided in room 104A beginning at 7:30 a.m.

AFTERNOON PICK UP

In order to ensure a safe and efficient dismissal, it is important that parents stay in their cars and go through the carpool lane to pick up their children, or pick up at the "Walk-Up" gate (after completing a liability-release form).

HEALTH FORMS

Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) requires all students to have complete and CURRENT IMMUNIZATION and HEALTH RECORDS ON FILE. These forms are available from your doctor's office and MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

ILLNESSES

A child who becomes ill during the day will be referred to our school nurse. Parents will be telephoned and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. Facilities for all-day care of ill children are not available.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL AT ONCE.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF YOUR CHILD:

- * HAS A FEVER
- * HAS A GREEN OR HEAVY NASAL DISCHARGE OR A PERSISTENT COUGH
- * HAS SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
(These may include, but are not limited to rashes, diarrhea, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, and abdominal pain).
- * Has any sign of head lice or bites until proper treatment is completed and the child is checked by the school nurse.

YOUR CHILD MAY COME TO SCHOOL IF S/HE:

- * Has symptoms that are chronic and the illness is not communicable (such as allergies, asthma, etc.).
- * Has not had a fever for at least 24 hours.
- * Is absent due to an illness for three days or more.
Please send in a doctor's note when he/she returns, indicating he/she is able to resume school activities.

MEDICATION

In the event that a child must receive medication during the course of the day's activities, written and dated instructions from a physician as well as a school medication authorization form must be on file in the nurse's office.

Medication must be brought to school in the original pharmacy container. The nurse administers all medications.

CLOTHING

Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothing and sturdy shoes or sneakers. "Party shoes" and sandals are dangerous on playground equipment. Sweaters or jackets should be included on cool days because the children will be playing outdoors part of the day. Pre-K boys must wear Tzitzit and Kippot daily.

Please send a complete change of clothing to remain at school.

ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

Parents, whose children are in diapers, must supply the following items to the classroom for their use:

1. DISPOSABLE DIAPERS
2. CLEANSING WIPES
3. LOTIONS OR CREAMS

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Children will be provided a snack both in the morning and in the afternoon. These snacks are generally fruit, cereal, pretzels, crackers or delicacies the children prepare as part of the curriculum. Early Childhood's pizza/hot lunch program is available through the school office on a monthly basis. For lunch, each child is to bring a dairy lunch from his/her home. To help us encourage your child to eat well, please minimize sending "junk" food. The following is a list of healthy food items you might want to include:

pasta	raisins	bananas	cheese	yogurt
cream cheese	cucumbers	crackers	cottage cheese	melon
tuna fish	egg salad	applesauce	orange slices	

BE CREATIVE! USE YOUR IMAGINATION!

ALL LUNCHES MUST BE KOSHER!

NO MEAT PERMITTED!

FOODS WHICH ARE PERMITTED TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL MUST HAVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING KOSHER SYMBOLS:



PLEASE IMPRESS UPON YOUR CHILD THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT SHARING LUNCH FOOD.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parent communication is an integral part of your child's educational experience. If the school has any concerns involving your child, we will communicate with you as soon as possible.

Weekly class newsletters and the Sabbath Lights will help inform you of happenings in your child's class and throughout the school. Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year. Additional conferences are scheduled as needed for your child during the school year. Of course, parents are invited to discuss the specific needs of their child and every effort is made to maintain open channels of communication between parents and staff. Please keep us informed of any events which might affect your child on a personal level. We love to give an EXTRA measure of TLC, if we are aware of any particular needs.

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATION

Our program encourages quality communication. Your child's teachers are eager to discuss day to day issues and concerns. If at any time you would like to talk with the Director or teachers, please do not hesitate to call. We are here to be responsive to your questions and ideas. Please share your concerns with us so we can address them in a timely and effective manner.

DISCIPLINE

Our policy at the Hebrew Academy regarding a discipline problem with a child is to minimize conflict and cultivate conflict resolution and social skills through the following approaches:

- * Communicate with the child in a calm, persuasive manner regarding the behavior.
- * Investigate the classroom situation to seek clues to the behavior and possible solutions with the classroom teachers.
- * Conference with parent(s) and teachers to discover possible cause(s) and to plan a cooperative solution.
- * Involve the administration and teachers in observations and conferences to set up an educational plan.

EXTRA INFORMATION

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We invite parents to celebrate Shabbat, birthdays and holidays with us. In addition, we encourage parents to visit the school, sharing their skills or hobbies with our students. We also need parents to assist with activities, phone calls, and class projects. Your participation is welcome and appreciated.

PARENT AND VISITOR PROTOCOL

Parents are required to follow security procedures as outlined by the school. All visitors to the Hebrew Academy must register with the security guard before entering the school building. Parent identification badges expedite the entry process and are available through the business office.

Parents and visitors are requested to come to the Hebrew Academy properly attired. You are entering a Yeshiva, a sanctuary to Torah. Men are required to wear a Kippah. Women are requested to dress modestly and wear a skirt. Our children will benefit by your example.

SMOKING POLICY

Because we have your child's health and safety as our primary concern, there will be **NO SMOKING IN OR AROUND THE BUILDING**. Second hand smoke is harmful to young children and smoking is a fire hazard.

TOYS FROM HOME

The Hebrew Academy is well equipped with educational play materials. Please do not send toys from home to school with your child. If a child brings a toy from home, there is always the risk of it being lost or broken.

Children are, however, encouraged to bring interesting items from home to share during sharing time. These types of items include souvenirs from trips, interesting bits of nature such as a special leaf, or rock, or perhaps a good book that can be read to the whole class. Be sure to label items clearly. Please, **NO TOY GUNS OR WEAPONS ARE EVER PERMITTED**.

TZEDAKAH

Students have the opportunity to perform the Mitzvah of Tzedakah each morning in class. Please give your child a penny or two daily.

RECYCLE

We welcome your child's outgrown toys, wooden puzzles, and books in good condition. We recycle paper towel rolls, plastic containers, costume jewelry, shells, "dress-up" clothing, fish tanks... We put it all to good use!

PARTIES

Birthday parties can be scheduled with classroom teachers on FRIDAYS, in connection with the SHABBAT celebrations. While "goody bags", party favors and entertainment are not allowed, parents are welcome to provide festive paper goods, an edible treat (ice cream/cake or cupcakes from a kosher bakery) and drinks. **No home-baked treats are permitted.**

BIRTHDAY BOOKS

We are happy to be able to share your child's birthday. A book will be purchased in your child's honor to be added to his/her classroom library. The cost of this book is included in your annual school activity fee. Your child will be given the opportunity to bring this book home for Shabbat to share with your family. Afterwards, it will be added to your child's class library where it will remain to be shared with his/her classmates.

HOLIDAY AND SPECIAL EVENTS ACTIVITY FEE

Throughout the school year we will plan exciting, creative holiday performances, cultural experiences, special events and have a birthday book for your child. We will collect a one-time \$100.00 fee for the school year, per child.

There will be no other celebration fees during the year .

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

THE CORNERSTONES OF OUR INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY ARE:

GOOD JUDGMENT

COMMON SENSE

SAFETY FIRST

SCHOOL CLOSURE:

1. The Academy will follow the lead of the Miami-Dade Public School System regarding school closure and evacuation.
2. In the event that there is no public school schedule for a day when the Academy is in session, and therefore no announcement regarding the public school system, we will act according to the following guidelines:
In the event of a HURRICANE WATCH OR HURRICANE WARNING FOR Miami Dade County, there will be no school. If school is already in session and a hurricane watch or warning is posted, students will be sent home in an organized manner.
In the event of a TROPICAL STORM WATCH OR WARNING, the school will be open. Call the school emergency hotline (305-460-3246) for up-to-date informatin.
3. In all cases when the Academy is open, use good judgment and common sense in deciding whether to go to work or to send your children to school. If you live in Broward County, act in accordance with the conditions where you live if the weather is more severe than near the school, and/or you feel that it is not prudent to travel to school. Even if you live in Miami-Dade County, if in your best judgment the roads near your home are not safe, or you have any other safety concerns, act accordingly.
4. Listen to the local radio and television stations for updates about weather conditions, school closing, and school reopening. In addition, we will post regularly updated messages on the **school emergency hotline at 305-460-3246 and/or the website.**
5. The campus will be thoroughly inspected for safety and health concerns before the reopening of school. Information will be available through as many means of communication as possible. **The school's decision to reopen or remain closed may not be consistent with the Public School's decision to reopen or remain closed. Administration will make the decision to reopen or remain closed.**
6. In the event of a sudden tornado or severe weather warning while school is in session, the students will be moved to a safe place if deemed necessary.

RELEASE FORMS

A general “RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM” is included as part of this Handbook, to which we ask you to pay special attention. In addition, a written and signed permission slip must be handed into the school office before each off-campus scheduled activity.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

In consideration of the Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as “the Board”, of the Rabbi Alexander S. Gross Hebrew Academy, hereinafter referred to as “the Academy”, arranging for the attendance of my child/children at the Academy, for the academic year and in consideration of the Board’s providing the opportunity for and permitting my child/children to attend, participate and/or take part in the programs of the Academy, including but not limited to academic, religious, athletic and social, we do hereby release, remise and forever discharge, indemnify and agree to hold harmless the Board, its officer, teachers, members, agents, servants, employees, and/or any one or more of any thereof against any claim, demand or cause of action whether now in existence or hereafter arising for any injury to the person of or for the death of the participant arising out of, resulting from, caused by, occurring during or in any way connected with the aforesaid attendance at the Academy, whether or not such injury, death or damage is caused by or contributed to in whole or in part by any action or failure to act, negligence, breach of contract or other misconduct on the part of the Board, its officers, teachers, members, agents, servants, employees, trustees, any other Participant in said Academy any participating parent and/or any one or more of any thereof excluding any willful misconduct or gross negligence. Each parent and child by receipt of this document, whether delivered separately or as a part of the Hebrew Academy handbook, and by virtue of their enrolling their child or children at the Hebrew Academy agrees to the terms of this release of liability.

RASG HEBREW ACADEMY PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2010-2011

I/we understand the obligations of students and parents at the Hebrew Academy.

I/we agree to comply with the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook.

I/we understand that the School may modify or eliminate any policy, procedure, or regulation as deemed appropriate by the administration.

Please sign and return the form below by August 27, 2010.

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2010-2011

Name of student: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Class/age level: _____ Date: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Please detach and return to school office.

Please detach and return



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