

# Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool Parent Handbook

212 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20003

**Director,**

## **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### ABOUT US

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool was founded in 2010 under the auspices of the Hill Havurah. At Gan Shalom, our goal is to create a warm, loving, Jewish community in which children feel safe to accept the challenge to try new things, expand their horizons, and learn through play, exploration, and hands-on experiences. We create opportunities which facilitate the development of the whole child through active, meaningful play. We do so by providing a carefully designed classroom environment and a variety of experiences which encourage growth in all developmental areas including social-emotional, cognitive, language, fine and gross motor skills, as well as the formation of a strong Jewish identity. Though all of these skills are vital, our primary focus is on the development of social-emotional skills as these form the basis of success in all other developmental areas.

Gan Shalom classes meet on the second floor of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, 212 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20003.

### PHILOSOPHY

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool is an early childhood educational facility for children ages 24 months through 4 years old. The philosophy of Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool takes inspiration from the educational theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, Banks Street, and Reggio Emilia. These schools of thought all proclaim that children learn through meaningful play. Our philosophy is also imbued with the Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam*, improving the world. We believe that strong social-emotional skills are the bedrock upon which all other developmental skills must lie and we strive to put these skills into a Jewish context.

The curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs, interests, and developmental stages of each child, and to create an atmosphere in which children feel safe and confident to try new experiences. Teachers invite children to explore new topics in depth through a variety of hands-on, sensory rich experiences. Our focus is upon child-directed activities that are planned, facilitated, and enhanced by our teachers. It is our desire to provide a warm, loving Jewish environment where each child feels secure and happy, and where learning is meaningful and fun.

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool believes that children's first teachers are their families. Parents

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and caregivers play an active role in our school as classroom aides on a rotating basis and help make up the governing body of the school.

## GOALS

The goals of the curriculum are as follows:

- Develop strong social-emotional skills by
  - Building independence through developing self-help skills, giving the children responsibility, allowing children to make choices, allowing children to take the lead in free play
  - Facilitating successful social interactions
  - Developing a strong sense of self-worth
  - Becoming part of a community
  - Thinking about the needs and feelings of others
  - Recognizing and appreciating differences
- Develop strong cognitive skills by
  - Providing hands-on, exploratory experiences
  - Helping children conduct research
  - Teaching pre-math and pre-science skills
  - Stimulating memory development
  - Focusing upon the process of learning
- Develop strong language skills by
  - Facilitating the development of spoken language
  - Providing opportunities to experience print
  - Introducing children to songs, word plays, poems
- Develop strong fine motor skills by
  - Providing a wide variety of materials and hands on experiences
- Develop strong gross motor skills through indoor and outdoor large motor play
- Develop a strong Jewish identity while recognizing and appreciating the varied backgrounds of our students. At Gan Shalom we focus on teaching children about *Tikkun Olam*, literally improving the world. We do so by helping children develop an increasing awareness of the community around them, starting with our school community and extending out to the neighborhood. We help them discover the role they can take in improving their community through positive social interactions, *mitzvot* (good deeds) and care for the natural environment.

## INDIVIDUALIZED OBSERVATIONS AND PLANNING

Gan Shalom teachers routinely observe each child's development, including but not necessarily limited to speech, articulation, social-emotional, behavioral, and physical development. The development of classroom management strategies and strategies for individual children occurs on a regular basis and is communicated to parents as needed. On occasion the teacher's observations indicate potential benefit from intervention such as the implementation of new classroom strategies and/or referral for professional developmental screening. Gan Shalom will work with the family to determine how best to address the individual needs of the child.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

At Gan Shalom we utilize a positive discipline approach. Teachers carefully design the classroom to help focus the children in their play and to minimize opportunity for running and other behaviors which can create negative energy. Teachers establish the rules and routines of the classroom early in the year and then enforce them by reminding children what they are supposed to do, as opposed to what they should not do. We impose natural consequences rather than punishments and actively teach the children conflict resolution skills. In the

event that a child exhibits challenging behaviors, the teachers will share the relevant information with the Director and with parents so that everyone can work as a team. In the event that internal strategies agreed upon by parents, teachers, and the Director, are not sufficient to allow a child to be successful, Gan Shalom may recommend bringing in outside specialists to offer additional strategies.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Tzivonim : Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am - 12:00pm

Shoshanim: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00am - 12:00pm

Sachlavim: Mondays through Fridays, from 9:00am - 1:00pm (some children attend fewer than 5 days)

8:45AM	In all classes, the daily duty parent should arrive to help with setup and remain for 15 minutes after the end of class to help with cleanup.
9:00AM	School begins. Teachers will open the doors to welcome the children. Prior to the start of school, the teachers are busy preparing the classroom so that the children will arrive to a well thought out environment. We therefore ask that all families except the duty family wait until 9am to enter the classroom.
Activities	<p>Although the daily schedule will vary somewhat from day to day and from class to class, in general, the school day will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 45 minutes of indoor free exploration</li> <li>● At least 45 minutes of outdoor play</li> <li>● Snack time</li> <li>● Story time</li> <li>● Small group explorations</li> <li>● Morning and Goodbye meetings.</li> </ul> <p>We will play outside every day unless there is excessive rain, a Code Red Heat Advisory, or it is below 32 degrees. Please dress your child accordingly.</p>
End of Day	Families are invited in for the last 5 minutes of the day to join their children in our goodbye circle. School ends at 12:00 in the Shoshanim and Tzivonim classes, and at 1:00 in the Sachlavim class.

## DAILY DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES

Families are responsible for transporting their own child to and from school. At no point will a Gan Shalom employee transport a child to or from the school. Children will only be released to those people listed on the Gan Shalom Registration Form designating pick-up authorizations, unless an email authorization is received. In the event that your pick up plans change during the day, you must text the Director and your child's teacher to inform them of the change.

## CO-OP DUTIES

Gan Shalom is a cooperative built on the participation of its families. Gan Shalom families are required to assist in the classroom as the teacher's assistant, to contribute out-of-school volunteer hours, and to fill an administrative role in the school either as a volunteer or through a contribution to support the hiring of additional staff.

### Duty Days

The daily teacher's assistant is **required** to arrive at Gan Shalom by 8:45am and remain until 12:15pm in the Tzivonim and Shoshanim classes and until 1:15pm in the Sachlavim class. The teacher's assistant is responsible for helping to set up, implement the day's program, and clean up at the end of the day. The teacher's assistant position in each class may be filled by any caregiver designated by the parent who has completed the required paperwork, including background checks, and may include parents, grandparents, nannies, or other significant individuals in the child's life who have a solid command of the English language.

The frequency and number of duty days served by each family will depend upon the enrollment in the class and the number of days the class meets. Typically each family is in the classroom every 3-4 weeks if they spread their duty days evenly over the course of the school year. The duty schedule for the teacher's assistant will be provided by the class scheduler prior to the beginning of the school year, and each parent/caregiver will have an opportunity to provide input on the days that work best for them. In the event that the regularly scheduled duty parent cannot come due to an advance change of plans, the duty parent is required to find a replacement parent/caregiver as soon as s/he becomes aware of the change. If they are unable to find a replacement, a fine may be applied. Any changes to the schedule should be communicated in advance to the Scheduler and the respective teachers whenever possible.

Each family is also responsible for providing snack on a rotating schedule to be set by the class scheduler. See the snack section below for further information.

All individuals fulfilling caregiver duties at the school must mail a Child Protection Registry Check Request by July 20, 2020, and must provide a health form completed by their physician, a staff health form, and submit to an FBI background check no later than July 20, 2020. Copies of the Registry check form is available on the Gan Shalom Parent Portal, as are instructions for completing all paperwork. In accordance with DC Licensing standards, we need to have at least 2 adults on site who are trained in First Aid and CPR. To meet this requirement, all parents and caregivers who will be serving co-op duty in the classroom must have current First Aid and CPR training and must provide us with copies of their training cards.

***Due to restrictions imposed by the District of Columbia licensing authority, failure to complete and file all required forms will result in your inability to serve as duty parent and/or your child's delayed attendance at school.***

### Out-of-School Volunteer Hours

In addition to time assisting in the classroom, all Gan Shalom families are expected to contribute out-of-school volunteer hours. Opportunities to complete these hours will be presented throughout the year - examples include helping with classroom set-up during the summer, representing Gan Shalom at the MOTH School Info Fair, helping with set-up and clean-up for school-wide evening celebrations, helping with set-up and registration for the winter fundraiser, helping with classroom clean-up at the end of the school year, etc.

### Administrative Duties

In addition to their duty days in the classroom and volunteer hours outside the classroom, all families are also required to support the school in one of two ways:

- Families may make a minimum contribution of \$1500, in addition to their tuition payment. This money will support additional time or resources Gan Shalom staff must spend to complete related tasks. For families who choose this option, the entire \$1500 must be paid by **June 2, 2020**. This contribution is non-refundable.

OR

- Families may take on an administrative responsibility within the school. The volunteer positions for the 2020-2021 school year include:

### Executive Committee (7-9 positions)

#### President

- Communicates with Director on regular basis to remain apprised of all significant issues
- Makes programmatic decisions together with Director as needed
- Manages co-op related-issues including parent communication as needed
- Approves drafts of policy changes written by Director before taking them to EC
- Makes financial decisions together with Director and Treasurer
- Approves annual budget together with Director and Treasurer
- Is available as a resource for families and faculty as needed
- On call for emergencies when Director is unavailable
- Reviews faculty contracts drafted by Director
- Creates agenda for EC meetings together with Director
- Attends and leads monthly EC meetings
- Receives reports from and supports EC members as needed

#### Vice President

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides relevant updates
- EC liaison to Director regarding facilities (leases, cleaning, keys, safety & security)
- EC liaison to Director regarding camp
- Distributes and tracks HR paperwork for new faculty/staff hires
- Works with Director and GS administrative staff to oversee and implement faculty search as needed
- Supports the President and Director as needed.
- May also serve as Hill Havurah liaison

#### Treasurer

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides monthly income and expense reports
- Works with the Hill Havurah Operations Manager to provide monthly actuals at the Executive Committee meetings
- Constructs annual budget together with Director and President
- Calculates and tracks tuition & fees owed by each student, including incoming and departing students
- Distributes IRS-sufficient invoices for deposits and tuition payments, for use during tax season
- Deposits checks as needed
- Makes financial decisions together with Director and President
- With Fundraisers, manage financial aspects of fundraisers including bringing cash, calculating profit

- and depositing income
- Provides IRS-sufficient donation receipts to fundraising contributors.

#### Secretary/Communications Chair

- Manages EC meetings schedule
- Attends monthly EC meetings and records minutes
- Distributes summaries of EC meetings to parent community with help of Director and President
- Archive minutes and other documents on Google Drive
- Handles community wide communications, including current and former families
- Assists director and teachers in updating website and social media
- Assists Director with annual update of Parent Handbook and solicits feedback from EC and Gan Shalom community
- Conducts two annual school wide surveys
- Solicit input from Gan parents of concerns or questions to raise before each EC meeting (and share at EC meetings)

#### Membership Chair -ideally 2

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides membership updates
- Conducts community outreach including communicating with prospective parents as needed
- Assists Director with recruitment and applications for following school year
  - Oversee outreach to the community and other tasks performed by Membership Assistant
  - Organize and attend two Open Houses
  - Meet with Director 1-3 times to make enrollment decisions
  - Send enrollment decisions via email and track acceptances
- Maintains wait list with help of Director
- Assists new families with selecting appropriate administrative positions within the community

#### Fundraising Chair--ideally 2

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides fundraising updates
- Oversees and assists with planning fundraising events/projects
- Maintains list of donations to share with Assistant Fundraising Chair
- With treasurer, ensures all acknowledgement letters and donation receipts are sent in timely fashion

#### Hill Havurah Liaison

- The Liaison serves as a board member of the Hill Havurah board and the Gan Shalom Executive Committee.
- This person must be a member of Hill Havurah
- Attends monthly EC meetings
- Attends monthly Hill Havurah Board meetings
- The purpose of this position is to help bridge the gap between Gan Shalom and Hill Havurah
- The Liaison will work with the Hill Havurah community and Gan Shalom families around issues that are relevant to both groups.

## Non Executive Committee Jobs --17 positions plus

### Substitute--3 positions (one per class)

- First person Director calls in each class in case of teacher absence
- Ideally someone who is able to come in on short notice

### Class Coordinator--3 positions (one per class)

- Reports to teacher, Director, and Vice President. Please cc teacher, Director, and VP on all emails
- Compile photos of all students in the class and their families (along with names & contact info) to distribute before school starts so that students & families can start getting to know one another
- Coordinate gifts and celebrations for teachers

### Class Scheduler -- 3 positions (one per class)

- Reports to Vice President. Please cc VP on all emails or reach out to VP if you have questions
- Works with parents to schedule co-op and snack duties
- Keeps track of number of days served to ensure everyone serves an equal number of days

### Social Chair/Holidays Coordinator--2 positions

- School-wide planner of out-of-school activities, like playdates, happy hours or parent learning opportunities. Ensure one planned activity a month.
- Responsible for organizing the Gan Shalom family Hanukkah party, Passover seders, and other holiday celebrations.

### Graphic Design & Marketing Assistant--1 position

- Reports to Membership Chair, Communications Chair, and Fundraising Chair. Please cc them on all appropriate emails.
- Updates brochure, signage for fall school information night, and other Gan Shalom-branded swag for distributing to prospective families and for fundraising purposes.
- Helps with signage for the spring fundraiser.
- Works with the Director, Communications Chair and Fundraising Chair on these projects, as applicable.

### Fundraising Assistant -- 1-2 positions

- Reports to Fundraising Chair; please cc all emails to Fundraising Chair
- Attends Gan Shalom Fundraising events
- Assists Fundraising Chair

### Membership Assistant--1-2 positions

- Reports to Membership Chair; please cc all emails to Membership Chair
- Attends Gan Shalom membership events: school information sessions, Hilloween, open houses, assist with supplies, food, set-up, clean-up for open houses.
- Helps publicize admissions process on MOTH and other community places

### Supplies Coordinator-- 1 position

- Reports to Vice President, please cc on all emails or reach out to VP if you have questions
- Checks in with teachers **each week** to determine whether any supplies are needed that are not available on Amazon (or might be easier/better from other sources)
- Keeps an eye on MOTH and other neighborhood listservs for stuff the classes might need

Facilities Coordinator -- 1 position

- Reports to Vice President, please cc VP on all emails or reach out to VP if you have questions
- Organizes parents to help with facilities improvements quarterly: fall, winter, spring, end of year. (painting, furniture assembly, backyard clean up, etc)
- Comfortable completing small repairs/building projects such as re-hanging hooks, mirrors, etc.

Gan Shalom Life Cycle Events Support Coordinator -- 1 position

- Reports to the President, please cc president on all emails and **check in on a monthly basis** with the Director to see if there is anyone or a family in need of help.
- Notifies the Gan Shalom community when a Gan Shalom family experiences a life cycle event (new baby, death or serious illness/injury, etc) during the course of the school year
- Communicates with families who experience a life cycle event to determine what would be most helpful and any guidelines (ex: food restrictions)
- Informs and coordinates efforts of Gan Shalom community with opportunities to best support the family by providing meals or other assistance
- Coordinates with teachers for children to make Big Brother/Big Sister gift for enrolled student who has a new sibling during the school year

Fabric Washer -- 1 position

- Reports to teachers. Please arrange a schedule with the teachers to pick up and drop off fabric items.
- Washes fabric classroom materials in home washing machine (chair covers, stuffed animals, dress up clothes) as needed.

Dish Washers -- 2 positions

- Picks up used silverware and dishes on Fridays to wash in home dishwasher
- Returns silverware and dishes on Monday

Learning Centers/Specials -- pick a number, any number

- Do you happen to be a science geek, architect, music teacher, garden nerd, expert mod-podge artist, or any other quirky but relevant to preschool education? If so, you can contribute to the school by supporting teachers in setting up relevant centers, teaching “specials” , etc.

**SNACKS & LUNCHES**

Snacks and lunches will be either dairy or *pareve* (i.e., containing no meat or dairy). No *hechsher* (symbol that the food meets standards of *kashrut*) is necessary. Due to allergies of children in our program and at the request of our landlords, all food brought into Gan Shalom classrooms must also be nut free. For Shabbat, families are asked to provide fresh Challah and white grape juice (Thursday in the Tzivonim and Sachlavim classes and on Friday in the Shoshanim class).

<b><i>Grains</i></b>	<b><i>Meat Alternative</i></b>	<b><i>Fruit/Vegetable</i></b>
<i>Multi-Grain Crackers</i>	<i>Low-fat yogurt</i>	<i>Any fruit or veggie <u>except</u></i>

<i>Multi-Grain Mini Bagels</i>	<i>Cheese</i>	<i>raw carrots and grapes.</i>
<i>Multi-Grain Cereal</i>	<i>Hummus</i>	<i>Can include no sugar added applesauce</i>
<i>Cereal Bars</i>		

Each class will determine whether the families provide snack for their duty days or for an entire week at a time. When providing snack on either a daily or weekly basis, families must bring in enough snack for each child in the class. In accordance with USDA guidelines, each day's snack must include nutrition from two of the following three food categories: Grains, Meat or Meat Alternative, and Fruits/Veggies.

In accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, whole grapes, raw carrots, and popcorn will not be served at Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool as they are potential choking hazards.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition is assessed as follows:

Sachlavim, 5 mornings a week (M-F): The tuition per child is \$10,500 per school year.

Sachlavim, 3 mornings a week (MWF): The tuition per child is \$6,600 per school year.

Sachlavim, 2 mornings a week (TTh): The tuition per child is \$4,600 per school year.

Shoshanim, 3 mornings a week (MWF): The tuition per child is \$6,000 per school year.

Tzivonim, 2 mornings a week (TTh): The tuition per child is \$4,300 per school year.

In addition, an **optional administrative fee of \$1500** is required for any families who do not plan to take on an administrative role. Paid members of the Hill Havurah will receive a \$200 discount on their last tuition installment.

A **nonrefundable deposit of \$500** is required by **April 3, 2020** (or a date to be determined by the school in the event a child enrolls later in the calendar year). The remaining tuition is payable in three (3) installments, with the deposit credited against the final installment. The optional admin fee is due along with the first installment. Here is the payment schedule:

	Due Date	Tzivonim	Shoshanim	Sachlavim (2 days)	Sachlavim (3 days)	Sachlavim (5 days)
Deposit	Apr 3, 2020	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
1st installment	Jun 2, 2020	\$1,433	\$2,000	\$1,533	\$2,200	\$3,500
2nd installment	Oct 9, 2020	\$1,433	\$2,000	\$1,533	\$2,200	\$3,500

3rd installment	Feb 12, 2021	\$934	\$1,500	\$1,034	\$1,700	\$3,000
	Total	\$4,300	\$6,000	\$4,600	\$6,600	\$10,500

All tuition payments should be made using the online payment portal or by check (made out to Hill Havurah). **Checks should be mailed or delivered to the Executive Director at:**

**Hill Havurah  
212 East Capitol St NE  
Washington DC 20003**

Payments that are received more than five days late are subject to a five (5) percent late fee. Families more than fifteen (15) days delinquent in payments may no longer be permitted to attend Gan Shalom, upon the determination of the Director and President.

There will be no reduction in tuition or fees resulting from illness, vacation, inclement weather, or holidays.

Adding Days (Sachlavim only)

There may be instances in which a day may become available for a current student to add to their attendance schedule (e.g. a 5-day family is only able to attend 4 days a week: the extra day will be offered to 2- or 3-day a week families). In these instances, Gan Shalom will notify current families that may be eligible to add that day. Available openings will only be offered to students that are in that location already.

**SUBSTITUTE & ABSENCE POLICIES**

It is the goal at Gan Shalom to have at least one faculty member in each classroom at all times – whether this be the lead teacher, the assistant teacher, or a paid substitute. However, in circumstances where a faculty member is out unexpectedly and a paid substitute cannot be found, it is the responsibility of the parents, as members of the coop, to serve as substitute teachers in the classroom. In such circumstances, a detailed lesson plan will be provided by the teacher or the Director, and all families in the class will be notified of the situation. On rare occasions, when no substitute faculty member or parent can be found, the Director will fill in if s/he is available.

In all cases, if no faculty or parent substitute can be found by 8:30am, school will be cancelled for the day. Any changes to the schedule should be communicated in advance to the Scheduler, and to the respective teachers whenever possible.

Duty Parent Absences

- In the event that the regularly scheduled duty parent cannot come due to an advanced change of plans, the duty parent is required to find a replacement parent/caregiver as soon as s/he becomes aware of the change.
- In the event that the duty parent is out unexpectedly due to illness or an emergency, the duty parent is responsible for finding a replacement parent/caregiver, with the assistance of the Scheduler. In the event that a replacement duty parent cannot be found by 7am, the Scheduler must notify the Director

who will determine whether the assistant teacher is available. If the assistant teacher is not available, the Director will attempt to hire a substitute or teach the class.

- In the event that one family fills in for another family, the family originally scheduled for the date in question is required to then take over a duty day originally assigned to the other family if at all possible.
- Charge for no coverage

#### Lead Teacher Absences

- In the event that a lead teacher schedules a personal leave day, s/he will give the Director as much advance notice as possible and the Director will arrange for the assistant teacher to lead the class in his/her place. The Director will try to hire a substitute teacher to replace the assistant teacher. If no substitute can be found, the Director will notify the relevant class Scheduler as soon as possible so that s/he can find a duty parent to cover for the assistant teacher.
- In the event that the lead teacher is out unexpectedly due to illness, s/he will notify the Director as soon as possible.
  - The Director will first determine if the assistant teacher is available. If the assistant teacher is available, the Director will attempt to hire a substitute to replace the assistant for the day in the Sachlavim class. If no substitute can be found, the Director will notify the Scheduler as soon as possible so that s/he can find a duty parent to cover for the assistant teacher.
  - If the assistant teacher is not available, the Director will attempt to hire a substitute to replace the teacher for the day. If no substitute can be found, an extra duty parent will be found to cover for the teacher.

#### Assistant Teacher Absences

- In the event that the assistant teacher schedules a personal leave day, s/he will give the Director as much advanced notice as possible and the Director will attempt to hire a substitute to replace the assistant for the day. If no substitute can be found, the Director will ask the Scheduler to find a duty parent to take the assistant's place.
- In the event that the assistant teacher is out unexpectedly due to illness, s/he will notify the Director as soon as possible. The Director will attempt to hire a substitute to replace the assistant for the day. If no substitute can be found, the Director will ask the Scheduler to find a duty parent to take the assistant's place.

#### Mid-Day Emergencies

- In the event that a faculty member or duty parent has to leave in the middle of the day, the Director will first attempt to find a volunteer duty parent who can come in. If a volunteer cannot be found quickly, and if the Director is not available, then school will be cancelled and all families will be contacted to immediately pick up their children.

## **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS**

In the event that a family chooses to withdraw their child from the program prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>, the preschool will retain only the application fee, materials fee, and initial deposit.

In the event that a family chooses to withdraw their child from the program after June 30<sup>th</sup>, but before the start

of the school year, **the family is required to pay for the first two months of school.** Tuition for this period will only be prorated and returned to the family if the preschool has been able to fill the vacancy **and** if the child's class is fully enrolled. Deposit money and the supply fee will be kept by the school.

In the event that a family chooses to withdraw their child once the school year has commenced, **the family is required to pay tuition for 60 days after the child's last day of school.** Tuition for this period will only be prorated and returned to the family if the preschool has been able to fill the vacancy **and** if the child's class is fully enrolled. The family is asked to provide as much notice as possible before withdrawing, with 60 days being the preferred minimum. The more notice the family provides, the more opportunity the school will have to fill the slot, which will benefit both Gan Shalom and the withdrawing family. Deposit money and supply fee will be kept by the school.

In general, due to classroom dynamics, Gan Shalom will not attempt to fill a slot vacated after February 1, and therefore, if a family chooses to withdraw their child after February 1, tuition for this period will not be prorated or returned to the family. However, in the event that the decision is made to fill the slot, the tuition will be prorated and returned to the family once the slot has been filled **if** the child's class is fully enrolled.

## **TERMINATION OF FAMILIES FROM THE SCHOOL**

While we do not anticipate that any student will be terminated from the program during the calendar year, there are certain expectations that every family must meet. In the event a family consistently refuses to meet the responsibilities required of them by the school, the President and Director will meet with the non-participating family to discuss the situation. In the event the family continues not to fulfill their responsibilities, the President and the Director together can decide to terminate a family from the school. Tuition will be prorated and returned to the family as of the child's final day of school. Deposit money and the supply fee will be kept by the school. All contact with the family must be documented, with a copy retained in the child's file.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Families are encouraged to discuss any concerns relating to their child's care and/or the classroom with their child's teacher whenever possible. Families are also welcome to address concerns to the Director and/or to the President of the Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool, with the understanding that the President and the Director have the right to freely share with each other all information related to the Preschool. In the event that the family continues to have concerns after speaking with the Director and the President, a final appeal can be made to the Executive Committee.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY/DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool is committed to student/family confidentiality. Except in such cases as required by law, information about a child will only be shared with the Director, Gan Shalom faculty members, and the President. Information will only be released to other authorized persons upon written request of the family. In addition, parents are asked to sign a release form giving permission to use pictures of their child in any publicity. Parents are able to deny permission to use photographs if they so desire.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANS/SHELTER-IN-PLACE**

In the event of an emergency which results in a need to vacate the premises, the Gan Shalom students and staff will be relocated to the Florida House. All families will be notified of change in location by text.

In the event that shelter-in-place is required, we will gather the students in the center of the room, away from the windows and doors. We will maintain one day's emergency rations of perishables and a 3 day supply of non-perishables and water. Extra diapers and wipes will be stored on-site. Each family will supply two day's changes of clothing, appropriate for the season, which will also be stored on site.

Parents will be notified by text as soon as possible if it is necessary to implement our shelter-in-place plan.

### FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills will be held every month at varying times during the program day. Students will practice leaving the school safely and gathering at a safe place outside the building. Records of these drills will be kept. Emergency exit routes are posted in the school.

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

Keeping our school a healthy place for children, teachers, and families requires your cooperation, understanding, and compliance with our health standards. All children must have current medical and immunization forms, completed by a licensed healthcare professional, on file at the Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool before he/she may attend.

Gan Shalom requires that all newly enrolled children are up-to-date on all immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding immunization against childhood diseases.

Children for whom immunization is medically contraindicated may be exempt from this requirement if their medical contraindication is documented by a physician who is board certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). In the event that any outbreaks or epidemics occur, as defined by the CDC and/or the District of Columbia Department of Health (DC-DOH), any children attending Gan Shalom who are not fully vaccinated will be required not to attend school until such time as the relevant government health officials have informed Gan Shalom that it is safe for these children to return school.

Parents are required to keep children home if s/he:

- Has had a fever during the previous 24 hours. Children must be fever free (100.3 or less *without* any fever reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school;
- Has had an upset stomach including vomiting or diarrhea during the previous 24 hours;
- Has a sore throat or severe cough;
- Has a runny nose to such an extent that the child is uncomfortable or requires an inordinate amount of the teacher's attention to control; or
- Has or is exhibiting signs of a contagious illness.

If a child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, families are asked to notify the school immediately so that the school can inform other families in the class and hopefully prevent the spread of the illness. Children can return to school only once the contagious period has ended.

The parent/guardian must inform the Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool, **in writing**, of a child's specific

allergies. Should a child's allergy situation change at any time during the year, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must inform the school immediately. The "Allergy Addendum" and (if applicable) the "Food Allergy Action Plan" must be completed and signed by a licensed physician authorizing treatment.

### MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION

Medication, including over-the-counter medications, may be administered to children only upon the written order of a licensed physician. The forms must be filled out correctly before any medication can be administered during school hours. The Director will provide emergency medication as per your physician's orders.

### MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called and parents will be notified. If a parent cannot be reached, the alternate emergency contacts designated on your child's emergency contact list will be called in the order they are listed. If emergency personnel determine that the child cannot wait for a parent's arrival, the Director/teacher will accompany the child in the ambulance to the hospital and remain with the child at least until a parent arrives. Parents of other children in the class will be contacted to provide coverage for the Director/teacher's absence or to pick up their children if coverage cannot be found in a timely fashion.

It is the family's responsibility to ensure that every emergency name and phone number for each child is on record and up to date. We will call the parent/guardian first if a child becomes ill during school. If we are unable to contact either parent/guardian, then we will call the emergency number(s) immediately.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event that DCPS is closed due to inclement weather, Gan Shalom will be closed as well. In the event that DCPS has a delayed opening, Gan Shalom will begin at 10:00am and will dismiss at the regular time.

Gan Shalom reserves the right to deviate from this policy based on the following factors:

- Weather forecasts/Advisories
- Conditions at the entrance of the school
- Staff commutes and the condition of the roads between their homes and Gan Shalom

A decision about closings or delays will be made by the Director and President and parents will be notified via email and text by 7:00am. Gan Shalom establishes a calendar at the start of the year school year and does not schedule make-up days for school days missed due to inclement weather or other emergency circumstances.

### **CLOTHING**

We recommend that all children wear comfortable clothes which allow freedom of movement, and safety when running and climbing. Art is an important means for teaching children the many skills they need to know and we do our best to put smocks on the children when they are engaging in particularly messy projects. However, despite our best efforts, it is not always possible to keep the children clean as they play and explore, so please do not send children in special clothes or clothes that cannot get dirty.

Unless extreme weather prevents it, we spend a part of everyday outside, frequently going to local playgrounds. Please be sure all children are dressed in weather appropriate clothes and have necessary outdoor wear available on a daily basis (rain boots for jumping in puddles, hats, mittens, snow pants, as needed).

Children should wear shoes which will be comfortable during the walk to and from the playground and which will not fall off while running and climbing. If your child wants to wear dress shoes to school which are not appropriate for the playground, please send him or her with appropriate playground shoes as well and the teacher will give your child time to change prior to going to the playground. Crocks and open toed shoes are prohibited due to playground safety concerns.

As children do occasionally get wet and/or uncomfortably dirty, all families must provide 2 complete weather-appropriate changes of clothing to be stored in the children's cubbies. For children who are toilet trained or working on training, we recommend clothes that are easy to pull up and down to facilitate the toileting process and enable as much independence as possible. For children still in diapers, parents must maintain a couple day supply of diapers and wipes in the child's cubby at all times. Families should also provide a fleece jacket that will be kept in the emergency bag taken by the staff during a fire drill.

## **DIAPERING**

Children do not have to be toilet trained to attend Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool. All children who are in diapers will be changed at least once, around the middle of the school day. Children will also be changed as needed when wet or soiled. We only use commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless a child has a medical need, documented by a physician, for other diapers to be used. In such cases, the cloth diaper must have an absorbent inner lining that is completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering will be changed as a unit.

## **PETS/ANIMALS**

The Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool does not allow pets or animals to enter the classrooms, unless they are service animals as defined by the ADA.

## **REPORTING OF UNUSUAL INCIDENTS**

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool is required by law to report any unusual incident that may adversely affect the health, safety or well-being of any child or children to the appropriate civil authorities. Unusual incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Death of a person occurring within the school
- Injury to, or illness of, any child occurring during program hours that requires hospitalization or emergency medical treatment
- Damage to the school that interferes with the capability of the school to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the children and adults in the school
- The presence of any individual in the school who has, or is suspected of having, a communicable disease that must be reported to the DC Department of Health
- Any circumstances under which a child is deemed missing or unaccounted for
- Any other occurrence at the school that involves a response by police, fire, ambulance or any other emergency service

Any individual who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an enrolled child is, has been, or is in immediate danger of being abused or neglected shall make or cause to be made an immediate oral report to the Child Protective Services Division of the Child and Family Services Agency via the 24 hour hotline

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(202-671-SAFE) or to the Metropolitan Police Department. All staff members, parents, and teacher aides are required to cooperate with legal officials as directed.

## **INCORPORATION OF PARENT HANDBOOK**

Parents agree that they received and reviewed the Gan Shalom Parent Handbook and accept all provisions of the Handbook in this agreement. The Handbook is available on the parent portal of the Gan Shalom website.

## **LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

Gan Shalom and its employees, affiliates, officers, and volunteers' entire liability arising from any and all causes, whether based in warranty, contract, tort or otherwise, shall not exceed the aggregate fees paid by each family for child care services within three months prior to the first claim filed. This limitation is cumulative, with all payments and liabilities being aggregated to determine satisfaction of the limit. The existence of multiple claims shall not enlarge the limit. Any claims not brought against Gan Shalom, its employees, affiliates, officers, or volunteers' within one year after the occurrence of the act (or failure to act) giving rise to such claim shall be deemed waived and released. In no event shall Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool, and its employees, affiliates, officers, or volunteers be liable for special, incidental, consequential, exemplary, punitive, or indirect damages hereunder, including without limitation loss of profits or loss of use damages, even if Gan Shalom, its employees, affiliates, officers, or volunteers have been advised of the possibility of such damages or losses. Parents acknowledge that these limitations on liability are essential to this agreement and reflected in the prices /rates set forth herein, and that Gan Shalom would not enter into this agreement without such limitations on its liability.

## **SIGNATURE**

This document must be signed by each family enrolling a child in Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool.

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Parent Signature

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Signature Date