

# Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool Parent Handbook

212 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20003

## Director Name

(Director@HillHavurah.org -###-###-###)

*Note: A COVID addendum will be prepared for the 2020-2021 school year that details how Gan Shalom will ensure the health and safety of all students and staff and meet all OSSE requirements. The addendum will apply during the COVID public health emergency, as determined by District government and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. When in conflict with the Parent Handbook below, the COVID addendum will supercede the Parent Handbook guidelines.*

## 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 enough to accept the challenge to try new things, expanding their horizons and learning 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 skills, cognitive skills, language skills, fine motor skills, 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 skills form the basis of success in all other developmental areas.

For the 2020-2021 school year, all Gan Shalom classes will meet in the same location, on the second floor of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation at 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 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

Tutim (Strawberries) : Tuesdays and Thursdays from approximately 8:30-12:00

Anavim (Grapes): Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from approximately 8:30am - 12:00pm

8:30-8:45AM	Staggered drop off of children. The drop -off time slot will be assigned to be either 8:30 or 8:45, and no more than 4 children will be dropped off during the same time period. Teachers and Director welcome children and invite them to participate in prepared activities
9:00-10:30	<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; and</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's below 32 degrees. Please dress your child accordingly.</p>
10:30-11:00	<p>Snack Time. students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● wash hands as supervised by adult</li> <li>● sit 6 ft apart</li> <li>● use disposable plates, cups, napkins</li> <li>● be served by gloved and masked teachers</li> <li>● sharing is not allowed</li> <li>● after eating students will again wash hands</li> </ul>
11:00-12:00PM	Outside time and end of day and staggered pick up. If you drop off at 8:30, you pick up at 11:45, if you drop off at 9 you pick up at noon.

### 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 a **written note** of authorization is received. In the event that your pick up plans change during the day, you must text your child's teacher to inform the teacher of the change.

## CO-OP DUTIES

***\*\*Note that parents will NOT serve as Assistant Teachers for the duration of the COVID pandemic; see COVID addendum.\*\****

Gan Shalom is a cooperative built on the participation of its families. Gan Shalom families are required 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.

Per OSSE regulations, in part-day programs that operate no more than four (4) hours per day, the Licensee may substitute an adult volunteer for an Assistant Teacher. Duty parents serve as Assistant Teachers in the classroom and are subject to OSSE guidance regarding that role.

Children shall not be left alone in any room or outdoors, even momentarily, without staff present. Volunteers (individuals who have not completed and file the OSSE required forms) shall not be used to meet adult-to-child ratio requirements. Only employees or certified Duty Parents can be responsible for directly providing care of, or supervision or guidance to, children shall be counted in the adult-to-child ratios. Each Duty Parent or volunteer at Gan Shalom shall work under the direct supervision of a Teacher, Assistant Teacher or Director at all times. The duties of each Duty Parent at a Gan Shalom shall include (a) assisting the Teacher, Assistant Teacher, or Director as directed and (b) providing supervision and appropriate care to the children in his or her assigned class or group, under the direct supervision of a Teacher, Assistant Teacher or Director. No Duty Parent or volunteer should have sole responsibility for a group or classroom, or for the Facility, at any time. Duty parents, volunteers, and chaperones are to seek support from the Gan staff to redirect student behavior per Gan behavior management policy. .

When parents are volunteering in the classroom, we request that you are focused and present with assisting the students and the teachers. Please limit mobile phone use as much as possible, if you are expecting an emergency call, inform the teacher / Director at the start of the day. Refrain from taking photos or videos unless instructed to-so by the teacher. See PHOTO POLICY for more information.

Each family is also responsible for providing communal snacks on a rotating schedule to be set by the class scheduler. In 2020/21 the family providing snacks will also be responsible for plates as needed. See SNACK & LUNCHES below for further information.

All individuals fulfilling caregiver duties at the school, e.g. class substitute, must mail a Child Protection Registry Check Request by August 14, 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 August 14, 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 with 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 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 \$1,500, the equivalent of \$150 per child per month, 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 chose this option, the entire \$1,500 must be paid by July 31, 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 positions)**

#### President

- Creates agenda for EC meetings together with Director
- Attends and leads monthly EC meetings
- Receives reports from and supports EC members as needed
- 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

#### 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 serve as the Hill Havurah liaison if President does not

#### Treasurer

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides budget updates
- Works with the Hill Havurah Operations Manager to provide monthly actuals at the Executive Committee meetings
- Approves annual budget together with Director and President
- Calculates tuition & fees owed by each student, including incoming and departing students

- Contacts families to distribute invoices for deposits and tuition payments as needed
- Makes financial decisions together with Director and President
- Manage financial aspects of fundraisers including bringing cash, calculating profit and depositing income

#### 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 social media
- 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

- 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
  - o Oversee outreach to the community and other tasks performed by Membership Assistant
  - o Assist Director with updating application and brochure as needed
  - o Attend MOTH School Information Night
  - o Organize and attend two Open Houses
  - o Meet with Director 1-3 times to making enrollment decisions
  - o Send enrollment decisions via email and track acceptances
- Maintains wait list with help of Director
- Assists new families with selecting appropriate administrative position within the community

#### Fundraising Chair

- Attends monthly EC meetings & provides fundraising updates
- Creates. plans, and delivers fundraising events/projects, both virtual and in-person as appropriate
- Maintains list of donations to share with Assistant Fundraising Chair
- Ensures all acknowledgement letters are sent in timely fashion
- Updates the Treasurer on major fundraising progress and income

#### 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
- Attend monthly EC meetings
- Attend 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 Administrative Positions

##### Substitute - 2 positions (one per class)

- First person education Director calls in each class in case of teacher absence

- Ideally someone who is able to come in on short notice
- Must meet all OSSE guidelines
  - current health form, suitability letter, CPR training, background check, fingerprinting and complete all required trainings within ninety days of hire.

#### Class Coordinator (2 positions, one per class)

- Reports to Director and Vice President, please cc VP on all emails or reach out to VP if you have questions. Please CC teacher, Director and president 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 get to know one another
- Organize & advertise school-wide {virtual or socially distant} meet & greet **before school starts**
- Assist teachers with organization of in-class parties
- Organize & advertise **school-wide end of the year celebration**
- Checks in with the Director / teacher(s) **every week** to determine whether any supplies are needed that are not available on Amazon (or might be easier/better from other sources)
- **Email teachers the first of the month** to see whether the facility needs anything fixed, updated, cleanliness, etc. and coordinate with parents and the Director as to when “fix up” days can be safely scheduled
- Works with the Director to organize parents to help with facilities improvements, as appropriate (e.g. painting, furniture assembly, yard clean up, supply closet organization, kitchen organization, etc.)

#### Membership Assistant (1-2 positions)

- Reports to Membership Chair; please cc all emails to Membership Chair
- Attend Gan Shalom membership events: school information sessions, open houses, assist with supplies, food, set-up, clean-up for open house
- Assist the Membership Chair in conducting outreach to the community, coordinating school open houses, and other tasks related with recruitment and applications
- Update brochure, signage for fall school information night, and other Gan Shalom-branded swag for distributing to prospective families and for fundraising purposes.
- Assist the Membership Chair with conducting Spring application and enrollment period (sending offers to families, tracking accept/declines, answering incoming parent questions, 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 BOTH teachers to see if there is any one or 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 Gan Shalom community of opportunities to best support the family by providing meals or other assistance
- Coordinates efforts of those families who volunteer to provide support
- Coordinate with teachers for children to make Big Brother/Big Sister gift for enrolled student who has a new sibling during the school year
- In consultation with teachers and Education Director, support celebrations of Shabbat and Jewish Holidays

#### Fundraising Coordinator (2+ positions)

- Reports to Fundraising Chair, please cc all emails to Fundraising Chair
- Works with the Fundraising Chair to support Fundraising activities throughout the year including the

- execution and tracking fundraising events
- Advertises virtual fundraising options with Gan Shalom Alumni families, MoTH, and other local listervs (i.e. Primary, Mabels Labels, etc.)
- Work together with Fundraising Chair to plan winter entertainment event such as Purim Carnival
- Includes soliciting and collecting donations, set up, tracking and delivering purchased items, and other logistical details
- Track all donations and notify Fundraising Chair

**Health and Safety Coordinator** (1 position)

- Reports to the Vice President and supports the Director on items related to following OSSE and CDC guidance for the 2020-2021 school year
- Emails the Director or teachers bi-weekly to check on status of health and safety supplies including: First Aid kit, facial masks, hand sanitizer, Lysol wipes, disposable diaper changing mats, gloves, etc.
- Supports and facilitates, along with the Director, the implementation and maintenance of new COVID-related equipment including air purifiers, personal remote thermometers, etc.
- Includes identifying and vetting options for health and safety equipment, completing research and administrative tasks as assigned by the Vice President and Director in meeting OSSE and CDC guidance
- Follows current events and DCPS announcements related to current school openings and closures

**Summer Camp Coordinator** (1 position)

- Reports to Vice President and Director: please cc all emails with VP and Director
- Supports VP and Director in planning, scheduling, organizing and advertising summer camp.

**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. In 2020/2021 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 Tutim class and on Friday in the Anavim class). No lunches will be brought or provided to students during School Year 2020-21.

<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> raw carrots and grapes.</i>
<i>Multi-Grain Mini Bagels</i>	<i>Cheese</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 snacks for their duty days or for an entire week at a time. When providing the snacks on either a daily or weekly basis, families must bring in enough snacks 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:

Tutim (Strawberries), 2 mornings a week: The tuition per child is \$5,200 per school year.

Anavim (Grapes), 3 mornings a week: The tuition per child is \$7,200 per school year.

We are a parent-run co-op and as such we expect active involvement from nearly all parents. If you elect to opt-out of volunteer opportunities there is an **administrative fee of \$1500** is required for any families who do not plan to take on an administrative role. **Note:** this year (2020-21) there is no separate materials fee, it is included in the cost of tuition for simplicity.

A **nonrefundable deposit** equal to the last month's tuition is required by **July 30, 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. The optional admin fee is due along with the first tuition payment.

	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Tutim (Strawberries) 2-days / week</i>	<i>Anavim (Grapes) 3-days / week</i>
<b>Deposit</b>	Completed	\$500	\$500
<b>1st installment</b>	July 31, 2020	\$2,600	\$3,600
<b>(Optional Admin Fee)</b>	July 31, 2020	\$1,500	\$1,500
<b>2nd installment</b>	August 28, 2020 (Prior to the first day of school)	\$900	\$1,200
<b>3rd installment</b>	January 8, 2021	\$1,700	\$2,400

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 Operations 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 five school (5) days delinquent in payments will no longer be permitted to attend Gan Shalom, upon the determination of the Director and President.

If Gan Shalom is unable to begin class in the Fall 2020, tuition payments will be reimbursed in full. Once Gan proceeds with reopening and the first day of school is conducted, there will be no reimbursement or reduction in tuition or fees resulting from illness, vacation, inclement weather, holidays, or cancellation due to public or health emergencies. *If Gan Shalom is required to or elects to close its physical space due to future public health emergencies, Gan Shalom staff will provide guidance on how to reopen safely and provide interim programs that are safe and age appropriate. Additional details to be provided in the COVID addendum.*

### Adding Days (Sachlavim only Does Not Apply in 2020/2021)

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 class already.

## **SUBSTITUTE & ABSENCE POLICIES**

**\*\*Additional details about substitutes and absences are detailed in the COVID addendum, to be consulted during the COVID public health emergency.\*\***

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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub. 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.
- 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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub.

- 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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub.
  - 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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub.

#### Assistant Teacher Absences

- In the event that the assistant teacher schedules a personal leave day, s/he will give the Director as much advance 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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub.
- 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. Whenever possible, the assistant teacher will be hired to take on a day from any family who takes on an extra day to sub.

#### Mid-Day Emergencies

- In the event that a faculty member or duty parent has to leave in the middle of the day, the Director, the Vice President, and the Scheduler 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**

For school year 2020-2021 considering the complications of COVID-1, all families commit to enrolling their child in Gan Shalom by sending their first tuition payment by July 31, 2020 with commitment to the program for the entire school year (Fall 2020 thru Summer 2021). In the case of withdrawal, the family is required to pay tuition for 60 days after the child's last day of school and work with the Gan Shalom Executive Committee to advertise and identify a replacement student. 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. Gan Shalom will not attempt to fill vacated slots after January 1, 2021.

In typical / non-COVID years:

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 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 written 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 of the co-op. 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. See PHOTO POLICY section for more information.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Education Director / Operations Director will communicate with parents about emergent items using a text platform (such as RemindMe or BrightWheel) to relay important information quickly, including drop-off information, weather alerts / school closures, etc. At the start of the year, parents will be asked to enroll their phone numbers via invitation, each class (2-day and 3-day) will have their own distribution lists.

All other standard communications about Gan Shalom updates, daily/weekly in-class announcements, requests, etc. will be sent via email to the parent email addresses provided in the application form by the Director / teacher(s) or the Executive Committee.

## **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 Gan Shalom family homes within walking distance of the school. Once locations are determined all families will be notified of locations.

Parents will be notified immediately upon reaching our emergency facility.

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 as soon as possible if it is necessary to implement our shelter-in-place plan.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills will be held every 2 months, 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**

\*\*\*Please see COVID Addendum for updated list of health and safety policies that are required during the COVID public health emergency.\*\*\*

Keeping our school a healthy place for children, teachers, and families requires your cooperation, understanding, and compliance with our health standards. Given the risk of COVID-19 this is especially important.

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 a certifying board which is a member of 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 the 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

If a child is diagnosed with a contagious illness (eg. Pink Eye), 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. In the case of a positive case of COVID-19 Gan Shalom will follow all guidance laid out by OSSE in the event of a child or staff member becoming infected. This includes contact tracing and potentially a temporary closure of the school.

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 classroom teacher 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, a Gan Shalom faculty member will accompany the child in the ambulance to the hospital and remain at least until one parent arrives. Parents of other children in the class will be contacted to provide coverage for the 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.

### **PHOTO POLICY**

Gan Shalom staff may take photographs of students for purposes of communicating with parents and posting to a website available only to current Gan Shalom families. These pictures will not be shared or posted on social media without the written permission of parents. Any parent that does not wish to have his/her child's photograph shared with other Gan Shalom families in these daily/weekly class updates must indicate such via a written note to the Gan Shalom Director. Gan Shalom staff shall assume that, in absence of such a note, parents give permission for their child's photograph to be shared with other Gan Shalom families only.

## **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
- All teachers' commute 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 together and parents will be notified via email by 7:00am. Gan Shalom makes every effort to establish a full 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 the 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.

## **DIAPERING / POTTY TRAINING**

### 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.

### POTTY TRAINING

When a family decides it's time to start toilet training, or toilet training spontaneously happens in the home, it's important the family lets the Director / teacher(s) know so they can be prepared. Often, pull-ups are necessary at school during the middle stages between diapers and underwear. What is needed is individual for each child, so please communicate with your child's teacher. We find that velcro seam pull-ups are easiest in a school environment. We aim to be as supportive as possible of all potty endeavours and we welcome all communication between parents and teachers to ensure your child's success.

### **PETS/ANIMALS**

The Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool does not allow pets or animals, 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 (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.