

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do you have openings during the school year? Are students admitted on a rolling basis?

From time to time we have mid-year openings in our classes. We will first draw from our waitlist and then advertise in the community. Applications are accepted throughout the school year to join our waitlist through the admissions portal. In addition to submitting your application, please email membership.ganshalom@hillhavurah.org to verify receipt.

2. What if my child won't be the required age at the time the school year starts? Could we have a delayed start?

DC regulations require that students be the posted age to attend school. On occasion, a child who will be turning the assigned age within a few weeks of the start of school will be considered for admission and can begin attending class once they turn the appropriate age. Younger children may be added to the waitlist and considered once they approach the required age. In these circumstances, tuition will be pro-rated to the time the slot is offered (not when classes are first attended), as the seat will be held in anticipation of their start.

3. Are students required to be potty trained?

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.

4. Do students keep kosher? Is the school nut free? Are snacks provided?

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).

Only the Sachlavim class will eat lunch at school.

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.

5. Does school start right at 9? What if I need to drop my child off early?

Student drop off begins at 9AM. Before-care is not routinely provided, but parents and caregivers may coordinate to watch children before hours. Please note this is not recommended at the beginning of the school year, as students are getting used to their new routines. The Executive Committee is currently exploring extended-day options, but can not confirm that this will be available in 2020.