



**GAN SHALOM**  
**גן שלום** COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

## **Parent Handbook**

212 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20003

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## **Welcome to Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool!**

Gan Shalom was founded in 2010 under the auspices of the Hill Havurah, and remains closely affiliated with the H.H. community. Our program welcomes all children ages 24 months to 5 years old and is housed at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, at 212 East Capitol Street NE, Washington DC 20003.

At Gan Shalom, our mission is to create a warm, loving, Jewish community in which children learn through play, exploration, and a hands-on approach. Our shared routines and nurturing atmosphere are designed to meet individual needs, interests and developmental stages of each child. Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool believes that children's first teachers are their families and parents and caregivers continue to play an active role in their child's learning by acting as a support role in the classroom and participating in the governing body of the school. As a part of our philosophy, staff provide intentionally planned environments and experiences to enhance cognitive development, encourage problem solving, strengthen motor skills and embrace their role within our community and Jewish identity.

Our philosophy for our day to day learning is inspired by the Reggio Emilia pedagogy of having a child-led curriculum. Our goal is for children to spend their time in our care building relationships, problem solving, exploring, creating, wondering, constructing, discovering, sharing, and finding joy in their learning alongside their peers and teachers. In our community, we strive to foster values that support a love of learning and responsible citizenship.

At Gan Shalom, we value and honor all, using compassion, empathy and respect. Some of the core values in Jewish early childhood education is evident in our learning through stories, documentation, daily practice and children's behaviors; including: Yedidut (friendship), Tikkun Olam (repair the world), Ometz Lev (courage), Rachamim (compassion) and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of loving kindness), particularly by doing mitzvot and collecting tzedakah.

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## Curriculum

### GOALS

The goals of the curriculum are to help facilitate children's learning through play and guide children's age-appropriate development and growth. Through different areas of play, including dramatic play, construction, art, and other areas, children will build their social emotional skills, independent thinking by making individual choices, understand and appreciate differences in others, as well as establish self worth, and gain a sense of empathy, relationship building and awareness of their role as a citizen in the community at large. Each day children will have opportunities to expand their cognitive learning with a variety of hands-on explorations, conduct research and focus on strengthening their language, gross motor and fine motor skills. As a Jewish early learning center, Jewish values and rituals are woven into our routine, as a way to make ties to the Jewish culture and connect with values that are an important foundation of Jewish identity and global citizenship.

### ASSESSMENTS

- 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.
- Support Services: 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. Gan Shalom partners with DC's Early Intervention Program, Strong Start to support any necessary observations, evaluations and professional guidance to provide all recommended support, based on the needs of the child.

### CLASS NAMES SIZES AND RATIOS

#### **Rimonim (Pomegranates)** 5 mornings a week 10-12 children ages 2.5-5

- Drop-off: 9 am (staggered)
- Pick up: 1 pm

#### **Anavim (Grapes)** 3 mornings a week 8 children ages 2-3

- Drop-off: 9 am (staggered)
- Pick up: 12 pm

#### **Tutim (Strawberries)** 2 mornings a week 8 children ages 2-3

- Drop-off: 9 am (staggered)
- Pick up: 12 pm

## Policies and Protocols

**CLASS PLACEMENT** Classroom placement will be determined by the director and any appropriate feedback from teachers. Classroom ratios are determined by age, and we can not guarantee your child will be grouped with their friends or preferred teachers. Our priority is to match families with their desired number of days (2, 3, or 5), appropriate age group and well suited teachers as **closely** as possible.

**TUITION DATES AND FEES:** A \$500 **nonrefundable deposit** is required to hold your child's spot in Gan Shalom. As of June 2021, remaining tuition payments are to be made in monthly installments through Brightwheel or if needed by check payable to Hill Havurah, with approval from director, on or by the 15th of each month. Monthly tuition payments are required beginning June 2021 and continue through March 2022.

Class Name	Monthly (June-March) Payment
Rimonim (Pomegranates)	\$1,120
Anavim (Grapes)	\$800
Tutim (Strawberries)	\$560

We are a parent-run co-op and as such we expect active involvement from nearly all parents. An **administrative fee of \$1500** is required for any families who do not plan to take on an administrative role. The optional admin fee is due along with the first tuition payment, on **June 14, 2021**.

**Late Payments** 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 Parent President.

**Tuition Support** Scholarship dollars generously provided by The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's Fund for Communal Vibrancy in partnership with Gan Shalom. If you are interested in receiving tuition assistance please contact Aaron Hiller (aaron.a.hiller@gmail.com).

#### Adding Days for Rimonim Class (non-COVID years)

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 3 days per 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 who are in that class already.

#### WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

For school year 2021-2022 considering the complications of COVID-19, all families commit to enrolling their child in Gan Shalom by sending their first tuition payment by June 14, 2021 with commitment to the program for the entire school year (Fall 2021 thru Summer 2022). 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 for the same time period.

#### Withdrawal of student during a typical / non-COVID year:

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 and application fees 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 and application fees will be kept by the school.

In general, due to classroom dynamics, Gan Shalom will not attempt to fill a slot vacated after January 15th, and therefore, if a family chooses to withdraw their child after January 15th, all remaining tuition through March 15th must be paid, and no tuition for this period will 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 and 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 additional administrative fees 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 Parent 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.

LATE POLICY Classroom volunteers will be responsible for remaining with child(ren) until all caregivers have arrived. Please be respectful of other parents' time and notify the director if you anticipate a late arrival. If lateness becomes an ongoing issue, a fee may be incurred after repeated warnings.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY & DISCLOSURE

Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool is committed to student/family confidentiality, except in such cases as required by law. In such instances, relevant 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.**

#### PHOTO POLICY

Gan Shalom staff and parent volunteers may take photographs of students with devices provided by the school, rather than personal devices, for purposes of communicating with parents and posting to a digital photo album or similar website available only to current Gan Shalom families. Pictures that do not reveal a child's identity may also be shared only to Gan Shalom social media accounts. 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 or social media must indicate preferences 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. If your child's image is selected to be used for additional marketing purposes, we will request approval as necessary.

#### DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR POLICY

At Gan Shalom we utilize a positive discipline approach. Teachers carefully design the classroom to help optimally engage children in their play and to minimize opportunity for running and other unsafe behaviors. It is our belief and priority to keep a safe environment for all children. If a child is behaving in such a way that creates an unsafe environment for themselves or for peers, children will be reminded how to properly keep their body and/or friends' bodies safe. If repeated mediation is required, a child may be asked to temporarily remove themselves from the space until they feel better prepared to return to the area in a safe manner. Occasionally, this may involve leaving the classroom *with an adult* to regroup in a different space. In the event that a child exhibits challenging behaviors repeatedly (biting, physical aggression) the teachers will share the relevant information with the Director and with parents. 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. If progress is not evident with proposed suggestions, the family may be asked to seek out an alternative care plan for their child.

### **CLOTHING AND TOILETING**

We recommend that all children wear comfortable clothes which allow freedom of movement, and safety when running and climbing. Children should wear shoes or have a change of shoes available which will be comfortable during the walk to and from the playground and which will not fall off while running and climbing. Children should wear closed-toe shoes and have rain or snow boots as the weather requires. Drawstrings should be removed from all clothing to allow for children to more easily use the bathroom and dress independently and to **prevent safety hazards**.

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.

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 you prefer not getting dirty.

Diapering 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 Children do not have to be toilet trained to attend Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool. We believe in celebrating successes in every aspect of our day including potty training, even when accidents happen! During potty training, it is especially important to keep an ample supply of clean clothing available at school. 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. Signs of readiness may include curiosity, prolonged dryness, requesting a clean diaper after wetting/soiling current diaper, and awareness of needing to use the toilet. 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. To be considered fully trained, a child must be self-sufficient wiping, flushing, undoing and redoing their underwear and pants and washing their hands thoroughly.

OUTDOOR PLAY Children will have the opportunity to play outdoors rain or shine, at the teachers discretion, keeping everyone's health, wellbeing and comfort in consideration. We recommend sending your child to

school in layers and ensuring they have weather appropriate clothing on a daily basis (rain boots, sunscreen, hats, etc). Teachers are responsible for the group and may not be able to attend to individual comforts as easily and we recommend your child as additional layers to add/remove as needed to stay comfortable. 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. Please be sure all children are dressed in weather appropriate clothes and have necessary outwear available on a daily basis (rain boots for jumping in puddles, hats, mittens, snow pants, as needed).

## **Procedures**

**FLOW OF DAY** Each morning, children will be greeted with a variety of open-ended invitations, either related to ongoing work or exploring open- ended materials. Invitations will often present children the opportunity to engage or re-engage in projects from previous gatherings or connected to ongoing studies or investigations. Classes will create a consistent routine for their day that includes a welcome ritual, morning meeting with meaningful dialogue, free-play, snack and time outdoors. Outdoor activities will often include neighborhood walks as part of the local community, and may venture to nearby parks.

**COMMUNICATIONS** Classroom learning and activities will be available through documentation, emails or newsletters, and social media. Community events, updates and reminders will be shared via email from classroom parents, teachers or the director.

Teachers will request more diapers, clothing or additional supplies as needed through Brightwheel or in-person when possible. Any child-specific communication, aside from supply reminders, will be shared through in person conversation when time allows, or scheduled meetings and conferences. Teachers and families should maintain ongoing communication about any observations or changes at home or at school.

Pertinent information that must be relayed more promptly, will be shared by the Director and/or classroom teachers through Brightwheel or a direct phone call. Phone trees (see pg. 11) may also be used to spread urgent messages to the community.

**FIELD TRIPS** Families will be notified for approval of any irregular trips away from school one week prior. Additional parents may also be invited as chaperones for some field trips.

**CELEBRATIONS** Birthdays, secular holidays and Jewish holidays will be discussed and planned as a class or community, based on each class's learning, and particular interests. Any foods shared for celebrations must include a food label and cannot be homemade.

**SUMMER CAMP** Gan Shalom will offer similar programming throughout summer months to include more water play and seasonally appropriate activities. Camp will be available for 6-8 weeks between June and August, with sessions and dates provided in early Spring. Registration will be made available to current students first, then to incoming families, shortly after session dates have been announced.

**UNUSUAL INCIDENT REPORTS / SUSPECTED ABUSE** 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:

- 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
- 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
- Death of a person occurring within the school

- 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 or has been 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.

## Food

### **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 suite must also be nut free. For Shabbat, families are asked to provide fresh Challah and juice (Thursdays/Fridays).

Each class will determine how snacks will be provided. Two options available to each class: (a) families are each assigned specific weeks and will provide snack for that entire week; or (b) families will provide snack during the days they are assigned as the parent classroom volunteer. 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, Protein Source and Fruits/Veggies.

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

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.

**Gan Shalom classrooms are nut-free.** However, as a shared space, we cannot guarantee that those who have nut allergies are totally protected. The FDA considers the following to be allergy prone and can often be found in familiar ingredients and recipes including pesto, baked goods using extracts or flavoring, milks, oils, nut butters, granola bars and marzipan. Please refrain from using these ingredients in snacks and lunches brought to school.

Almonds (Almond Milk)	Beech Nut	Brazil Nut
Butternut	Cashew	Chestnut
Chinquapin	Coconut	Filbert/Hazelnut
Ginkgo Nut	Hickory Nut	Lichee Nut
Macadamia/Bush Nut	Pecan	Pine Nut
Pistachio	Shea Nut	Walnut

**STAFF** Teachers are hired based on their credentials and qualifications for safely caring for your children and encouraging their learning. The school will have regular opportunities for professional development, which may require family input or for school to close to allow for these opportunities. Staff may not provide outside

employment or other services to families (such as babysitting) without prior approval from the Director.

## Health & Safety

**HEALTH FORMS AND IMMUNIZATIONS** All children must have current medical and immunization forms, completed by a licensed healthcare professional, on file at the Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool before they 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)) children must receive updated vaccinations prior to returning to school or until relevant government health officials have informed Gan Shalom that it is safe for the children to return school.

**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. At the start of each day, parents must sign their children in using Brightwheel at drop-off. See COVID Addendum for more information about drop-off procedures. Teachers will sign children out once the child has been returned to the care of their parent or other authorized caregiver. Children will only be released to those people listed on the Gan Shalom Registration Form **designating pick-up authorizations, unless authorization is received.** In the event that your pick up plans change during the day, you must inform your child's teacher and director of any changes. Any additional caregiver not listed on previously approved forms will be required to provide proper identification at the time of pickup.

### **MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

\*\*\*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.

### **NOTIFYING SCHOOL, MEDICATION, ILLNESS GUIDELINES AND POLICY**

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 any undiagnosed rash or unusual redness or sores
- 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
- Requires extra care or is not able to participate in daily activities

If a child does not appear well during drop-off, they will be sent home. Children may return to school once severe symptoms have subsided and mild symptoms become manageable. A child may return to school on antibiotics after 24 hrs, with significant improvement and/or written guidance from a medical professional. Please notify your child's teacher if they are currently on any medicine that may cause side effects, including but not limited to fatigue, decreased appetite or upset stomach.

If a child is diagnosed with a contagious illness (eg. Pink Eye or head lice), 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.***

**ALLERGIES** 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. Any necessary medication or medical equipment must be kept securely on site at all times. Medications and ointments will be safely stored for easy access for teachers and emergency medications (Benadryl/Epi-Pens) will remain with the child's classroom teacher at all times.

#### **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. Diaper cream, sunscreen and bug spray must be listed on your child's forms for application during school hours.

#### **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.

#### **SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

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 neighboring church townhouse. If an evacuation requires an alternative location, families will be notified immediately upon reaching other emergency evacuation facilities.

In the event that shelter-in-place is required, we will swiftly engage our shelter-in-place plan and notify families.

Parent volunteers will be responsible for reading Gan Shalom's Emergency Preparedness Summary and preparing themselves for all emergency situations before their first duty day.

**PHONE TREE:** In the rare occurrence of needing a phone tree system, families will be provided code words and the appropriate order in which to conduct phone calls. If the family you are instructed to call does not answer, proceed to the next family in line to ensure the continuity of urgent messaging.

**FIRE DRILLS** Monthly fire drills will occur without notification to properly prepare children and staff for unannounced emergencies. Students will practice leaving the school safely and gathering at a designated space outside the building. The first few months of school teachers will practice their exit route with children and inform parents of any practice occurrences to allow for continued safety dialogue and reassurance at home.

#### **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 by 7:00am. Gan Shalom makes every effort to establish a full calendar at the start of the school year and does not schedule make-up days for school days missed due to inclement weather or other emergency circumstances.

**PETS AND ANIMALS** The Gan Shalom Cooperative Preschool does not allow pets or animals, unless they are service animals as defined by the ADA.

## **Family Participation/Co-Op**

### **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.

### **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 they become 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

### **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.

## **CO-OP DUTIES**

- (1) **PARENT CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER DUTY DAYS** Parents will select volunteer days at the start of each school year, based on their child's class size. Days will be chosen on a first-come first-serve basis. Volunteers should plan to arrive ten minutes prior to the start of the school day, and stay until every child is picked up and to support the classroom teacher with cleanup.

### **PARENT CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

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.

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. Children shall not be left alone in any room or outdoors, even momentarily, without staff present. Volunteers (individuals who have not completed and filed the OSSE required forms) shall not be used to meet adult-to-child ratio requirements. 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. 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 June 14, 2021 and must provide a health form completed by their physician, a staff health form, and submit to an FBI background check no later than June 14, 2021. Copies of the Registry check form are 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 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Gan Shalom is a preschool based on family participation. Gan Shalom families are required to contribute out-of-school volunteer hours, and filling an administrative role in the school either as a volunteer or through a contribution to support the hiring of additional staff.

In addition to time assisting in the classroom, all Gan Shalom families are expected to contribute out-of-school volunteer hours with various opportunities throughout the year. Volunteers may be needed during classroom set-up, school fairs, family engagement events, classroom or school celebrations, fundraiser assistance and classroom clean up between school and camp programs.

### **Parent Advisory Team: PAT (7-8 positions)**

- Attend monthly meetings
- Stays in regular communication with the Director with ongoing updates
- Participate in new hire interviews coordinated by the Gan Shalom Director

**President:** The Parent President is responsible for attending all related monthly meetings, prepared with a collaborative agenda and/or meeting notes created with director, meets regularly with the director to update on PAT related tasks, shares input on adjustments to program policies from a parental perspective, consults with fellow parents on program feedback and acts as an extra set of eyes to financial and budgeting tracking. The Parent President should be available to be on call for emergencies.

**Vice President:** VP is acting liaison between facilities during nonschool hours and key responsibility is coordinating camp. VP may serve as Hill Havurah liaison if President does not.

**Treasurer:** Supports Gan Shalom Director, HH Executive Director and HH Treasurer to create annual budget, calculates annual tuition and monthly fees for parents, assists with financial components for fundraisers

**Communications Chair:** Community wide communications using appropriate listservs, updates social media, school wide surveys, solicits input from families to address questions/concerns at EC meetings, monthly meeting scheduler and time keeper, records minutes, shares summaries, archive minutes to shared drive

**Membership Chair:** Manages enrollment and membership updates Gan Shalom Director and HH Executive Director with current enrollment numbers and tracking, including waitlisted students (Brightwheel), maintains class enrollments with appropriate ratios for each age, community outreach with the communications chair and communicating with prospective families, organizing open houses, collaborates with Gan Shalom Director to updates application, brochure, and ongoing tracking for recruitment

**Fundraising Chair:** 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 a timely fashion

**Hill Havurah Liaison:** Serves as a board member of the Hill Havurah board and the Gan Shalom PAT and must be a member of Hill Havurah. Attends monthly Gan Shalom PAT meetings, as well as monthly Hill Havurah Board meetings. The purpose of this position is to help bridge the gap between Gan Shalom and Hill Havurah

### **Non-Executive Administrative Positions**

**Substitute - 6 positions (two per class):** must be available with short notice

**Class Coordinator (3 positions, one per class)**

- Class Pictures, Meet and Greet, Playdates, In-Class Parties, End of Year Celebration, Birthday Coordination, Supplies, Facilities Coordinator, Snack Calendar

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

- Attend Gan Shalom membership events; Assist the Membership Chair

### Fundraising Coordinator (2+ positions)

- Advertises virtual fundraising options (i.e. mabels labels, bookdrive, virtual auction), assist with various events including Purim Carnival, soliciting, collecting and tracking donations (fundraising logistics)

### Family Engagement & Life Cycle Events Support Coordinator (1-2 positions)

Supports families welcoming a new baby or experiencing a loss in the family. Coordinates with Parent President and the Director.

### Summer Camp Coordinator (1 position)

- Supports VP and Director in planning, scheduling, organizing and advertising for summer camp.

Communications Assistant (1-2 positions): support Communications Chair, designs and assists with creating marketing materials,/ tools... helps director and classroom teachers to maintain up to date documentation

Specialist(s) share a skill or hobby (gardening, yoga, music) with the kids once a month or so

### Other Roles as needed:

## 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.

## SCHOOL READINESS CHECKLISTS

### **Forms to Sign: (add links)**

- Registration (Care Away from Home)
- Emergency Medical Treatment
- Medical Administration
- Travel Authorization
- Liability
- (COVID addendum)
- Health Forms (and Oral Health Form for children 3+)

**After completing the above forms, initial and sign below to acknowledge your family have completed all necessary steps prior to attending Gan Shalom.**

## **CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

- \_\_\_\_ I have thoroughly read and am prepared to assist with all emergency practices (pg ).
- \_\_\_\_ I agree to the terms of being a mandated reporter for any suspected abuse or neglect.
- \_\_\_\_ I am fully vaccinated and properly equipped to be a present and healthy classroom volunteer.
- \_\_\_\_ I agree to follow all protocols related to the Photo Policy provided on (pg ).
- \_\_\_\_ I understand and respect the confidentiality needs of the Gan Shalom community on (pg ).

After initialing the above statements, please sign and date here:

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Expected Date of Parent CPR/First Aid Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Background Check for Suitability Letter submitted on: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Packing List**

*Reminder to label all clothing, shoes, hats, water bottles, etc. with your child's name to help our children and teachers!*

- water bottle and carrier/sling for walks
- 4x6 family photo
- diapers/pullups/wipes (if needed)
- two changes of clothes in labeled ziploc bags
- Tzedakah (*charitable giving*) - 15-20 quarters in a baggie
- summer wear, e.g. sun hat, sunscreen, etc.
- winter wear, e.g. hat, gloves, boots, etc.
- extra pair of rain boots/sneakers at school for bathroom accidents or dry shoes after rain/snow play
- extra face masks in a plastic bag(s) and a lanyard, if possible
- lunch and yoga mat (Rimonim class, only)

## **2021- 2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

\*\*Gan Shalom will be closed on days in **bold**\*\*

August 30 - First Day of School

**September 6 - Labor Day**

**September 7 & 8 - Rosh Hashana**

**September (15 &) 16 - Yom Kippur**

September 20-27 - Sukkot

September 29 Simchat Torah

**October 11- Indigenous People Day**

**November 11 - Veterans Day (P/T Conferences\*\*)**

**November 25/26 - Thanksgiving**

November 28 - December 6 Hanukkah

***Fall Professional Development - early December*** (around Dec. 9th? if it is held this year)

**December 24- January 3 Holiday Break**

**January 17- MLK Day**

**February 21 - Presidents Day**

**(date in March for Spring Professional Development and Parent-Teacher Conferences)**

**April 15- April 25 - Passover Break**

(April 22 Earth Day - Tikkun Olam Volunteer Day- falls during spring break)

May 16-17 - Shavuot

**May 30 - Memorial Day**

June 10 - Last Day of School

July '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

September '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

6: Labor Day  
7-8: Rosh Hashana  
16: Yom Kippur  
20-27: Sukkot  
29: Simchat Torah

October '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

November '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

December '21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

11: Indigenous People Day

January '22						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

February '22						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

17: MLK Day

April '22						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May '22						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June '22						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April 15-25 Passover

30: Memorial Day



School Closed: Holidays



School Closed: Professional Development Day



Conferences (no school)



First and Last Day of School