



BMH  BJ

PRESCHOOL

Play  Connect  Grow

Family Handbook

2023-2024

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About BMH-BJ Preschool

BMH-BJ Preschool Mission

At BMH-BJ Preschool, it is our mission to provide your children with a warm, nurturing educational environment based on early childhood education best practices, which emphasizes school readiness skills and builds a strong Jewish identity at every age level.

BMH-BJ Preschool Vision

To become a premier center for excellence in Jewish early childhood education in the Denver Jewish community. Over the next three to five years, BMH-BJ Preschool will strive to fulfill our mission through:

- Shifting the focus for the younger age children to a true education provider at each age level.
- Achieving the highest [Colorado Shines](#) rating for not only the pre-kindergarten rooms but for the entire school.
- Fulfilling the requirements for additional early childhood education certifications from nationally recognized organizations such as [NAEYC](#) (National Association for the Education of Young People).
- Building a professional learning environment for staff through the development of continuing education programs and partnerships across the Jewish and ECE communities.

BMH-BJ Preschool Philosophy

We Celebrate the Unique Potential of Each Child

We are revising our teaching methods to better integrate an emergent, child-centered philosophy into our play-based curriculum. We want to provide the best and most innovative approaches to early childhood education at every grade level and, most importantly, provide consistency from classroom to classroom and continuity from year to year.

Our school's whole-child approach to education encourages a love of learning, curiosity, creativity, and independence while focusing on age-appropriate social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Our fantastic enrichment activities, including yoga, music, sports, Hebrew language, cooking, and movement, are integrated into the daily schedule and inspire children to explore, take risks, and, most of all, have fun!

We Integrate Jewish Values Into Everything We Do

Our [values-based curriculum](#) promotes respect for self and others, and meaningful connection to the concepts of *Tzedakah* (charity), *Mitzvot* (good deeds), and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). We believe these to be universal values critical for developing whole children.

We Are Your Partner on the Jewish Journey

To enhance our Jewish curriculum and our celebration of Jewish culture and heritage, we take advantage of many [collaborative opportunities](#) with other Jewish organizations. Through these partnerships, we are able to bring many unique hands-on experiences into the classroom such as *shofar*, *grogger*, and *matzah* factories, candle-making, planting and harvest units with Sprout City farms, and many others. Our weekly school-wide Shabbat sing-along, community-wide holiday celebrations, and our cooperative relationship with BMH-BJ clergy and the synagogue's extended community provide special family-centered opportunities to expand your religious experience.

We Create a Safe Environment for Creativity and Self-Discovery

Our classrooms are child-centered and directed, and are organized around different learning centers, which allow teachers to facilitate small group and individual interests and growth.

Centers include science, sensory, manipulatives, art/easel, blocks and construction toys, dramatic play, listening, reading/books, writing, puzzles and games, music, and math. Additionally, our proximity to the Green School provides a unique opportunity to extend learning to other facilities and promote your child's connection to the natural world.

We Consider Your Children Our Greatest Asset

Our warm, nurturing educational teams also are true professionals in early childhood education. A large percentage of our staff members have a master's level education or other advanced degree, and all of our teachers are qualified as Early Childhood Teachers by the Colorado Department Human Resources. We are proud of our multilingual, multicultural staff. Because we have teachers from many countries and cultures, we can explore diversity and multiculturalism in a unique and meaningful way in the classroom.

Our staff regularly participates in extensive continuing education in both Jewish and early childhood education. Through community and in-house sponsored educational opportunities, as well as staff-to-staff collaborative training, our teachers are encouraged to learn from one another and work together to bring ECE best practices into the classroom.

We Form a Family-Teacher Partnership

We believe that parents play a critical role in a child's learning experience, and our newest initiative focuses on extending classroom learning experiences into the home through strengthening the teacher-parent connection. A strong teacher-parent partnership allows for a better understanding of a child's specific needs both inside the classroom and at home, and provides parents with greater insight into the classroom experience.

The [preschool website](#) is a continually growing resource for parent education and support with links to behavioral, development, educational, social, and religious resources. Additionally, a parent resource binder is available in the preschool office. This includes: information about parenting classes, early childhood intervention resources, and physician resources.

New volunteer opportunities are available for parents to take on leadership roles in the school or to become more involved in classroom activities. The Preschool Advisory Board provides strategic leadership and support for the administration, while the PTO promotes community building through special events and fundraising. Room Parents help teachers coordinate special events and activities and provide an additional level of communication with parents. Family members are always welcome to participate in Shabbat Party and other holiday celebrations, too.

We Thrive on Jewish Values and Concepts

Jewish concepts and values are deeply embedded into each educational unit to enrich everyday learning in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way. We use art, song, movement, food, storytelling, and emergent literacy to help explore the universal themes expressed in Jewish culture and religion. Learning Jewish values and concepts are a very important part of our everyday practice within our early childhood center. Learning how to get along with one another, learning how to respect our parents, teachers and friends, and learning how to help others are just a few examples of the countless principles and values that we hope to instill in our little ones.

School is closed in observance of Rosh Hashanah (two days), Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah/Shemini Atzeret, Passover, and Shavuot. Our curriculum does not include Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and Easter. Please refer to [our calendar](#) for the exact dates that school is closed.

Partner Programs and Certifications

We are very proud to recognize that we have a three-star rating - which is the highest possible - with [Colorado Shines](#). All of our classrooms were rated on the quality of our learning environment, the opportunities the program provides toward building family partnerships, the training and education of staff, the adult-to-child ratios, and the group size in the classroom. Additionally, as part of Colorado Shines, each classroom receives ongoing coaching from the organization.

Denver Preschool Program (DPP)

BMH-BJ Preschool is an enrolled provider of the [Denver Preschool Program \(DPP\)](#). Some details:

- DPP is the result of a voter-approved initiative to provide tuition credits for parents and quality improvement grants to preschools.
- DPP is open and voluntary for all Denver children the year before they are eligible for Kindergarten.
- Tuition credits are awarded to all Denver families regardless of income or other activities.

Registration and the Classroom

Admission, Registration, and Withdrawal

Admission is based on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given first to BMH-BJ members, then to families of children enrolled at the time of application, and then to all other applicants.

Children will be admitted to the BMH-BJ Preschool upon completion of registration forms, receipt of the registration fee, and receipt of all mandated health and immunization forms properly filled out by a physician. BMH-BJ Preschool only accepts children that are fully immunized unless directed by a physician for a medical reason.

If you leave our school, please give us as much notice as possible. A one-month minimum notice is required in writing, and there will be a minimum of one month tuition charged after notice of intent to withdraw from the school. Additionally, all children are enrolled at the discretion of the preschool director. BMH-BJ Preschool reserves the right to withdraw admission acceptance at any time.

Note: If you are registered for the fall and withdraw any later than June 1st, you will be charged two full months tuition.

Class Level Placements

We accept children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. We follow Denver Public Schools guidelines in determining the age-appropriate class level for each child in our preschool program. The age attained by October 1st is the marker we use (e.g., a child being placed in the two's program must have reached the age of 2 by October 1st of the current year, the age of 3 by October 1st for the three's program, etc). BMH-BJ Preschool reserves the right to assign children to a class based on teacher observations, recommendations from early childhood specialists, and the director. Every effort is made to ensure the best grouping that will allow for a positive experience for each child.

Classroom Ratios

Our current teach to student ratios for the 2023-24 school year are:

- Nursery 1:3
- Ones 1:5
- Twos 1:6
- Threes 1:7
- Pre-K 1:7

We always strive to keep our adult:child ratios as low as possible. We have additional float staff who, when not covering a teacher who is absent, serve as additional staff in classrooms. Our classrooms are staffed according to licensing regulations, and we are always searching to hire more qualified staff members.

Classroom Transitions

The same teachers will be with your child from August through May. If possible, teachers will remain with the same children throughout the summer, too, so there are fewer transitions for the child. It is possible that a child will loop for two years with a teacher (e.g., transition class through a 2-year-old class).

Before the school year starts, a letter will be sent to families with the child's classroom and teachers. There is an open house and a formal meet and greet at the beginning of each year so children are able to see their new classroom and meet their new teachers. There are many cross-classroom activities, so that children can become familiar with their new teachers for the beginning of the coming year.

- **Nursery to new classroom:** Prior to an infant's transition out of the nursery at 12 months old, a letter will be sent home to the family explaining the process. We know this transition can be challenging, so we encourage families to visit the new classroom and meet the teachers. The nursery staff also spends time with the child in the new classroom, along with the new teachers, prior to their move.
- **Pre-K to Kindergarten:** As children transition to kindergarten, we invite [DJDS](#) (Denver Jewish Day School), [Denver Academy of Torah](#), and [Hillel Academy](#) to come and speak to parents and children about their school. Children are also encouraged to spend a day at their potential new school.

Learning Differences

We welcome children from all backgrounds and developmental stages. In order to work effectively with your child, it is important that we have a full understanding of your child. If there is information that is not covered on your intake form that could give us a more comprehensive understanding of your child, please discuss this information with your child's teacher or the director; such information is strictly confidential.

Services offered to special needs children are in compliance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#). Children with special needs shall be included in enrollment when it is determined that the staff and/or facility can provide a beneficial classroom setting for this child. At the time of application to the school, parents shall be required to fully disclose any of their child's known special needs. It is the prerogative of the school to request that the child be evaluated prior to admission to BMH-BJ Preschool and that any medical, educational, or other pertinent records be offered to the school for consideration. Parents of children receiving services through IFSP, IEP, ILP, or private special needs plans are encouraged to share the information with the school, and classroom teachers. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with these specialists.

For any child with a developmental delay that has already been identified, we will make referrals to the appropriate outside resources. We work with IREE (Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence). If a teacher has concerns about the development of a child, the parents will be notified and IREE will be brought in to observe. A meeting will take place with the parent, teacher, and a consultant from IREE and further recommendations will be made. If a parent brings a concern to the teacher and the school feels extra support is needed, the teacher/school will refer the parent to the pediatrician, Child Find, or Rocky Mountain Human Services.

Lastly, we recognize the importance of having hearing, vision, and dental screenings for our children. We provide resources and information at the beginning of each school year. We also have the same list available in the office upon request.

Speech and OT Specialists

Parents who hire specialists in the field of Occupational Therapy or Speech Therapy to work with your children during classroom time are asked to sign a form located in the office stating that you give the specialist permission to work with your child at a designated time at BMH-BJ Preschool.

Schedule

Hours of Operation

Early Care	7:00 am to 9:00 am
Morning Session	9:00 am to 12:30 pm
Full Day	9:00 am to 3:00pm
Aftercare	3:00pm to 6:00pm (Monday through Thursday) 3:00pm to 4:00pm (Friday)

Typical Daily Program

9:00	Arrival
9:00 – 10:25	Discovery Center Activities, Large/Small Group Learning Projects, Special Programs, Enrichment classes
10:00-10:25	Snack
10:25 – 10:30	Clean-Up
10:30-11:15	Movement/Outside Play
11:15-11:45	Clean-up, bathroom, wash hands
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15-12:30	Show 'n' Tell, Quiet Time, Closure
12:30	Dismissals
12:30-2:45	Nap/Rest/Quiet Activities
2:45-3:00	Snack
3:00	Dismissal

All times are flexible and may change to meet each classroom's daily needs.

Schedule Changes

We know that, sometimes, family circumstances may require changes to the school schedule. Some details:

- Requested changes to a child’s schedule **must be submitted in writing no later than the 18th day of the month** prior to the month of the affected change.
 - No change may be made for a period of less than one entire month.
 - All changes made after an application has been submitted will result in a **\$20.00** change fee per child and, depending on the change, may result in additional tuition fees.
 - To request a schedule change, please use the Schedule Change Form, which can be found on our website.
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Tuition

The preschool fee is determined by adding up the total cost of each week that is attended per child for the whole nine months. Since the total bill is only for the weeks attended, and it is then divided into monthly increments, you are not paying for more services than your child receives. Vacation and holiday time are already accounted for in your fee. Refunds or make-up days are not granted for absences, vacations, or school closures because of the observance of Jewish holidays. We ask that you notify us in advance of any planned long-term absences so that we know to hold your child’s classroom space. Although we will do everything possible to hold a temporarily vacated classroom space for you, a space cannot be guaranteed unless it is paid for.

A \$175.00 non-refundable registration fee (\$50.00 for each additional sibling) is required at the time of registration. If you withdraw from the school on a temporary basis and re-enroll at a later time in the school year, you will be assessed an additional \$175.00 registration fee. A second registration will not be assessed for any month(s) your child does not attend school, but for which you have paid tuition.

Similarly, you may request a delayed start to the school year once you have enrolled and paid the registration fee. You will be assessed \$50/month for the time your child is not attending. If your reserved space is needed by another family whose child is able to start prior to the start date for your child, we will contact you for the first right of refusal. If, at that time, you wish to secure the space for your child, you must begin immediate payment of tuition. If payment is not initiated, your space will be released to the other family, and your deposit will not be refunded.

Payments

Tuition payments are managed by our office and charged through Tuition Express. All families must register a credit card or bank account number for use in this system. When you register, you will be able to select an auto-payment option on the 15th or 25th of each month. Through Tuition Express, your credit card will be charged, or your designated bank account will be debited, on the 25th day of the month prior to the month being charged or the 15th day of the current month. If your automated bank debit charge is denied because of insufficient funds at any time, you will be required to use a credit card for all additional payments.

If personal circumstances prevent you from participation in an auto-payment system, other payment arrangements must be made with the preschool director prior to the start of the school year. Non-automated payments must be received in the preschool office no later than the 15th of the month. If accounts are delinquent for 60 days or more, your child may not return to school until the account becomes current.

Scholarships

Financial assistance is available for preschool families who are in need of financial help to cover school tuition depending on funds available during the school year. Scholarship funds from BMH-BJ should be considered as a last option after all other local scholarship programs have been exhausted. Please speak to the director if you are interested in scholarship information.

JEWISHcolorado

A community scholarship fund for Jewish ECE was initiated with a grant from Rose Community Foundation. The Annual Scholarship Fund continues today with funds raised by JEWISHcolorado from generous donors. In order to be considered for a scholarship award from JEWISHcolorado's Early Childhood Education Scholarship Fund, families seeking financial assistance should

1. Complete the registration process at their chosen ECE center, and
2. Apply for scholarship funding through [FACTS](#) (an independent grant and aid assessment service).

Termination of Enrollment

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the director to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- Abuse of other children, staff, or property
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior toward self, other children, or staff
- The preschool's inability to meet the child's needs
- Delinquency in tuition payments

Logistics

Drop-In

If you need to drop a child in for early care, you must coordinate with the office by 4 pm on the previous day. If you need to drop a child in for Aftercare, you must coordinate with the office by 12:30 pm on the same day that you need Aftercare. The drop-in rate is \$15 per hour. We will not be adjusting drop-in rates on the half-hour any longer. You will be charged for the entire hour of the scheduled drop-in.

Example scenario: If you need to drop off a child at 8:45 am on a Wednesday and your child's scheduled day starts at 9 am, you must contact the preschool office by 4 pm on Tuesday to coordinate. Then, you will be charged \$15 for the full hour from 8 to 9 am.

Drop-Off and Pickup

Our school opens at 7 am. Children absolutely cannot be dropped off before 7 am under any circumstances. If you are not signed up for early care, the school day begins at 9 am. Children cannot be dropped off in their rooms before 9 am.

If you are scheduled to pick up your child at 3 pm, you must retrieve them by 3pm, as children are transitioned to other classrooms or spaces at that time. If you arrive after your scheduled pick-up time, you will be charged \$1/minute. For example, if your scheduled pick-up time is 4 pm and you arrive at 4:20 pm, you will be charged \$20.

Children may not be dropped off in early care before their scheduled time. For example, if your scheduled drop-off time is 8 am, you cannot drop them off at 7:45 am. We close at 6 pm Monday through Thursday and 4 pm on Fridays. Please be respectful of the fact that, when you're late, our staff can't leave to be with their families or attend to other obligations.

Note: We understand that emergencies and traffic happen, but there are few instances that will prevent you or another family member from calling us and letting us know the situation so our teachers can plan accordingly. If you plan to be late, you must call the office at 303-388-7543.

Late Drop-Offs

When children are dropped off in the middle of the day or afternoon, it is very disruptive to the classroom environment. Children should not be dropped off any later than 10:30 am, and we ask that you contact the preschool office to let us know when to expect your child to arrive at preschool. We have found that it is best for the child to be dropped off by 9:15. For more information on this policy, please [read this email we sent](#). If you have questions about this policy, please contact the preschool office.

Early/Aftercare Schedules

If you know that your schedule is changing and you cannot keep the times you committed to pick up and drop off your child, please contact us to adjust their schedule. For example, if you've noticed you can't get to the preschool by 5 pm, then adjust your schedule to pick up at 6 pm. Or, if you're scheduled to come at 8 am but you're noticing you need 7:45 am so you can make it to work on time, please change your scheduled drop-off time to 7 am.

Please note that we do charge a one-time schedule change fee, but it will save you money in the long run, help our teachers and staff to plan better, and keep all of our children safe and happy by being properly staffed.

The preschool parking lot is on the west side of the school. Exercise extreme caution in the parking lot. Children sometimes pull away from an adult hand and dart in front of cars. Please

do not leave your car in the emergency/fire lane (even for a minute), unless instructed to do so in inclement weather. Please do not park in spaces designated for handicapped use.

Sign In and Out

For purposes of these procedures, an “authorized party” is any adult, age 18 or older, listed on the child’s Authorization Form. Authorized persons must show the security guard and preschool office their ID on their first pickup of the child, if they have not previously met before.

- When a child is dropped off at school, the adult bringing them must sign them in by scanning the check-in QR code at the entrance to the preschool using the Remini app.
- First, the person dropping off a child must take the child to either their primary classroom or their early-care classroom and then sign the child in on the sign-in/sign-out sheet.
- Please also designate on the sign-in/sign-out sheet when and who will be picking up the child in the designated columns.
- When dropping off your child at 9 am, you must always sign your child into their primary classroom.
- If you are picking up your child from their primary classroom, you must sign them out using the Remini app.

Persons Other Than an Authorized Party Signing a Child In or Out

If someone other than an Authorized Party is picking up a child, they must be authorized to do so by the parents and have access to the [Remini app](#). It is the responsibility of the parents to let the preschool office and the teachers know. Someone other than the Authorized Party must stop in the preschool office to identify themselves. The office will check their name and be sure they are the correct party that the parent authorized to pick up their child on that particular day. It is also the teacher’s responsibility to make sure that they can release the child to this particular party.

Visitors

All visitors must check in with the security guard and sign in, as well as wear a Visitor’s Pass before being buzzed through our security doors. Before a visitor leaves the building they must turn in their Visitor’s Pass and sign out. Visitors are defined as someone other than a parent or other Authorized Party.

Procedure for When a Child is Not Picked Up at the End of the Day

If a child has not been picked up by the end of the day, the director or Aftercare staff will call all numbers on the child’s Emergency Form. After that time, if no one has picked up your child and we have not heard from anyone, we will call 911, and your child will be picked up by police, at which time Social Services will take over.

Separation

For many children, going to school is a brand new experience. Saying goodbye at the school door may be difficult for your child but may be even more difficult for you. If you aren’t ready

for your child to separate from you, your child will react to your feelings. If children feel they are being pushed away or that they will miss something at home, they will cling to you more tightly. Preschool should be a fun and happy time in your child's life. It should be a special time for your child — for growing up, forming new friendships, and learning about themselves, others, and their world. Your children need to know that you think school is a place where they will have fun and will be safe. They also need to know that you will always come back to pick them up. Children are all unique and react to new situations differently. Some may walk right in without a look back. Others will cling or cry. These are all normal responses. All of us (parent, child, and teacher) can work together to help your child make a positive adjustment to school.

Food

BMH-BJ is a kosher facility. Any foods that are brought in to share with the entire class must be kosher. Acceptable kosher symbols include:



Lunches sent from home must be dairy, pareve, or fish (no meat or shellfish). There may be occasions during the year when we are able to offer a purchased hot lunch program. We will notify you when that program is in effect. In accordance with the synagogue's standards, these lunches will be strictly kosher and will not contain meat.

When bringing food in for an event, please bring said items in completely sealed one day prior to the event so they can be checked by the supervising rabbi. Please remember that the rules of *kashrut* can be complicated, and we are always happy to answer any questions.

The only food BMH-BJ preschool provides is *challah* on Friday mornings. We ask parents to **provide labeled snacks with AM/PM** written on all packages. In some rooms, you will place the snack in a bag or basket either inside or outside of the child's classroom. Please confirm with your child's teachers how they prefer snacks to be separated. If your child comes early or stays for Aftercare, please pack enough food for additional snacks. We discourage bringing in sugary/sweet snacks and encourage parents to provide snacks that are wholesome and healthy.

You must label child's snack containers and water bottles. If snacks are in packages, please write your child's name on the wrapper. Many children are moved from Early Care to classrooms to Aftercare with their snacks and water bottles. In order for teachers to identify the correct food and drinks for each child, everything **must** be labeled.

Please note that in accordance with new infant care and early childhood education standards, foods may not be packaged in plastic bags or paper lunch sacks. You must provide any needed

serving utensils. Plastic containers and insulated containers are accepted methods of food storage.

More about your child's food:

1. **Lunch Box:** You know best what your child will/will not eat. BMH-BJ is a kosher facility, so please refer to the Kosher Policy when packing your child's lunch. We know many of our families are not observant Jews, so if you have questions, we are just an email/phone call away! ***Please Note: We cannot heat food up.***
2. **Morning Snack and Afternoon Snack:** We suggest two items such as a piece of fruit and crackers, applesauce pouch and granola bar, etc.
3. **Aftercare Snacks:** Children who stay after 3 pm need additional aftercare snacks. Due to licensing regulations, BMH-BJ Preschool cannot provide snacks.
4. **Water Bottle:** Your child will bring this to and from home each day.

For more information, see our [website](#).

Parent/School Relationship

Parent/school Communication

1. The teachers will be observing, documenting, and assessing all of their children from the beginning of the school year.
2. You will receive weekly communication through emails, letters, and [Remini](#) (see below).
3. The preschool newsletter is emailed weekly using MailChimp. If you do not receive it, please be sure to check your spam filter, and email marketing@bmbhpreschool.org if you are not receiving it.
4. There will be two formal conferences each year: one in the winter and the second in the spring. Teachers are available throughout the year, as well, for informal conferences and conversations.
5. You will receive an end-of-the-year portfolio.
6. Throughout the year, it is vital that we are well informed about your child. Please share with us any happenings that affect your child's feelings. Close ties between home and school are important.
7. Please notify us of any changes in your place of living or employment. We must have a working emergency number at all times, and we must be able to reach you.
8. Your child's teachers can be contacted through remini.

Additionally, please provide, as appropriate:

1. **Diapers/Pull-Ups and Diaper Cream:** We cannot/will not apply anything to your children without your consent. Please make sure products are labeled clearly.
2. **Nappers:** If your child is staying for naptime, he/she will need a fitted crib sheet, 1-2 blankets and anything else they use (pacifier, lovey, etc.). Please put all nap stuff in a labeled bag with a closure (zipper, snaps, or drawstring). Linens are sent home on Fridays to be washed.
3. **Lovie/Blankie:** If your child is new to our school, we recommend your child bring a special “lovey” or blankie/stuffed animal. This is something to help them feel safe.

Language

Families whose native language is not English will be provided with an interpreter on an as-needed basis. This is part of our ongoing effort to support our home-school connection. Important documents can also be translated upon request.

Additionally, our school honors each child’s native language. We do our best to put the child in a classroom with a teacher that can communicate with them in the language they speak at home

Remini

At BMH-BJ Preschool, we use [Remini](#), a family engagement app that is designed specifically for early childhood programs. We use this application to streamline communication, documentation, and the check-in process, which features a daily health questionnaire. The Remini app enables teachers and administrators to share photos, videos, daily journals, and much more to tell the story of your child and their classmates at school.

PTO

BMH-BJ Preschool [parent organization](#)’s purpose is to strengthen, enhance and encourage a strong community through family involvement. The PTO promotes community building through special events and fundraising. Room Parents help teachers coordinate special events and activities and provide an additional level of communication with parents. The PTO meets bi-monthly and all parents are welcome. Notices about the meetings will be emailed, and you can [join the PTO Facebook Group](#), too.

Parent Participation

Although BMH-BJ Preschool is not a cooperative school, we do have an open-door policy where parents are welcome to visit their child’s classroom. We ask that all parents volunteer for at least three hours during the school year in any capacity. Parents are urged to be actively involved in their child’s earliest learning experiences. Parent participation is enriching and satisfying to both parent and child. Parent volunteers are needed to serve as room parents, drive on field trips, be a surprise guest reader, participate in PTO, and in any other areas where parental time and expertise can be helpful. Thank you!

Birthdays

Many children enjoy celebrating their birthdays with their class. For such occasions we encourage parents to once again provide nutritious snacks. Please see the teacher if you would

like to celebrate your child's birthday at school. You may also wish to speak to them about healthy alternatives instead of birthday cake and cupcakes.

Please refrain from placing invitations to parties in our cubbies at school unless you have invited the whole class. We request that in order for the entire class to have an opportunity to attend an outside-of-school celebration, you not schedule events on Jewish holidays or during times that conflict with planned school events.

Since we do not celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, or Easter at the preschool, we feel it is inappropriate to put invitations or cards for these events in the children's mailboxes. We request that invitations to all parties, including birthday parties, be sent through snail mail or email.

Items from Home

Please discourage your child from bringing possessions from home. Any items that do need to be brought should be clearly labeled. Naturally, irreplaceable treasures do not belong in school. Also, no guns, swords, or other toys of violence, please.

Always check your child's classroom or cubby for lost items. If you still cannot find the item, please check the "lost and found," which is located outside the preschool office. Remember, label all clothing and valuable property.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety

Emergency exit instructions are posted in all classrooms, and the staff is trained to follow specific evacuation procedures. We have fire drills each month. Teachers carry a class list, emergency evacuation bag and walkie-talkie, and they account for each child.

Director and synagogue staff "sweep" halls and bathrooms to ascertain all children are out of the building and help as needed to evacuate infant and toddler rooms.

Classrooms have several designated exit points depending upon placement in the building. In the event that children need to be picked up, staff and children will be at the Denver Green School.

Tornadoes

Tornado Watch: In the event of a Tornado Watch, the office will monitor the radio for safety information. Classrooms will be contacted via the walkie-talkie system as to whether or not we need to proceed to safety.

Tornado Warning: In the event that the Tornado Warning sirens sound while school is in session, the office will use the walkie-talkies to signal a tornado warning evacuation. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. Each class will line up at the door. Teachers take a head count and bring their class lists with them.
2. All classes will proceed to Fisher Hall.
3. Students and teachers will not be dismissed until the Tornado Warning has ended.
4. Teachers will wait with their class until the director or a member of the synagogue staff instructs them to return to their classroom.

Lockdown, Active Shooter, and Evacuation

Staff and children participate in bimonthly lockdown, active shooter, and evacuation drills. Security has helped develop a detailed plan for a lockdown and an active shooter. In the event of a serious emergency, parents will be notified through Remini, email, and/or mailchimp and in the event children are evacuated to the Denver Green School, parents will reunite with children there.

Location of Children

Children will be in their classrooms unless specifically scheduled to be elsewhere. All teachers are responsible to carry walkie talkies provided by the school so that they and their children can be located at any time. All of our children's classrooms and their schedule information are in the preschool office. All teachers also have access to your child's information if your child attends our Early Care Program, Drop-In Program, or Aftercare.

Health and Wellness

Illness

Sick children are not allowed at BMH-BJ Preschool. This is to allow children to recover and to prevent them from spreading their illnesses to other children. Please keep your child home if there is any indication of illness, including fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, sore throat, earache, eye infection, or headache. If you are unsure about his/her condition, please monitor your child at home. For the benefit of all our children and staff, we will call the parent of any child who appears to be ill, and the parent will be expected to pick up their child immediately. Children are not allowed to attend if they have a fever, and must not return until they are fever free with no medication for 24 hours. Children with diarrhea and vomiting are also not allowed at school until the child is free from symptoms for 24 hours. BMH-BJ Preschool is not equipped for children who are not able to participate in all activities. If your child is not well enough to play outside or participate in all activities, please keep them at home.

We acknowledge that this can be inconvenient for parents. Please respect it is our job to keep all the kids healthy while in our care. If your child might infect other children, you must keep them at home.

For more, see our [Sick Policy](#).

First Aid

All teachers and staff of the BMH-BJ Preschool are required to complete appropriate first aid training, including CPR.

Injuries/Accidents

In the event a child receives a mild scrape or cut, the teacher will wash the area thoroughly with soap and water, place a bandage over the area and send a note home in the student's cubby explaining the injury. In the event of any more severe injury, the director will be notified immediately, parents will be contacted, any necessary emergency measures will be taken, and an accident report will be completed afterwards. One copy of the accident report is sent home and the other is put in the child's file.

Medical Forms

You must submit to the office the following completed forms:

1. [Certificate of Immunization](#): Required by state law to be signed by a licensed physician or a representative of the state or local health department by the first day of school.
2. [General Health Appraisal Form](#): Filled out and signed by the doctor's office.
3. Emergency Form: Listing emergency phone numbers and people designated to pick up your child. (This is filled out as part of your preschool registration.)

Medication

The following requirements must be met before administering medications, both prescription or over-the-counter. These forms **MUST** be filled out by a pediatrician. All medication is kept in a locked cabinet and is administered and documented by a medication-trained staff member.

1. Written authorization from the health care provider that is separate and not part of a [General Health Appraisal Form](#).
2. Parent written authorization.
3. Medication in the original labeled container.
4. Documentation of medication administration.
5. Nebulized medications and emergency injections (such as Epi-Pen) require a written health care plan completed by the child's health care provider.

You can request these forms from the preschool office. The BMH-BJ Preschool staff will not be held responsible for missed or incorrect dosages of medication. Preschool staff may not deviate from the written authorization from the health care provider with prescriptive authority. If at all possible, please administer all medicines at home.

Allergies

Allergies to any particular foods must be noted on the [General Health Appraisal Form](#), which is kept in the office and on the list posted in the child's classroom. If your child has a specific nut allergy, their classroom becomes a nut-free room. If a child's allergy plan includes medication

and/or an Epi-Pen, we need two copies of the [allergy plan](#) from the pediatrician, two Epi-Pens and the medication sealed in labeled bags (one for the office and one for the classroom).

Infectious Diseases

BMH-BJ has adopted the Jewish community's HIV/AIDS policy. As stated in the policy, state and federal law has declared that persons with HIV/AIDS are physically handicapped and shall not be discriminated against. Therefore, like anyone else with a physical handicap, children who are infected with HIV/AIDS shall be permitted to attend preschool. HIV/AIDS is not transmitted through casual contact involved in attending school.

Only the director of the center shall know the identity of an infected student unless the child's parents determine that other staff should be informed. In the event that some staff members are informed, they shall treat this information as highly confidential.

All staff are trained in the use of Universal Precautions for infectious diseases. When changing diapers and for all incidents when **any** child is bleeding, the staff uses gloves and cleans up with a bleach solution.

Diaper/Toilet Training

Parents of toddlers who are not toilet trained must provide disposable diapers and wipes. We are unable to use cloth diapers in our facilities. Teachers will work with all children who appear to show readiness and whose parents communicate to teachers that they are working on potty training at home. Please review and sign our [Potty Training Policy](#).

Discipline Policy

Our children's safety and well-being is our primary concern. The policy at BMH-BJ Preschool is to prevent problems before they occur. This happens by the teachers facilitating the development of self-control by providing positive guidance through modeling and encouraging appropriate and positive behavior. Redirecting the children to a more acceptable activity and setting clear limits regarding our expectations enables us to prevent many possible problems before they occur.

We let children know that deliberate hurting (kicking, hitting, biting, etc.) or yelling is not appropriate behavior. If necessary, we will guide the children in discussion about what happened, how they feel, and what they can do to resolve the problem. This process often helps children talk through and work through their feelings. Our goal is for the child to acknowledge his/her actions and work through the situation so that the end result leaves them feeling good about themselves. If a child continuously misbehaves and disrupts the class, the parents will be asked to come in for a conference to discuss how we can best meet the needs of the child.

Biting

Many pre-verbal children go through a period of [biting](#). They can bite for several reasons:

1. They find the impulse to bite is a natural defense when concerned, not having yet mastered more refined ways of defending and protecting themselves and their wants.
2. The immediate effect of the bite may be so gratifying to the biter, both sensually and dramatically that for a time, the biter may be inspired to go on a rampage of biting.

We recognize that biting, while it may not be acceptable, is normal and natural for toddlers and not unusual for two year olds and young children in general. It frequently occurs in groups of children just on the verge of fluent language.

We ask you to trust that each biting incident will be handled in a developmentally-appropriate and professional manner. Our policies concerning biting will be:

1. Staff will carefully monitor children.
2. When a biting incident occurs, staff will first comfort the child who was bitten.
3. Staff will then respond with a clear message to the biter that biting is unacceptable, while recognizing the biter's feelings and suggest alternatives to biting behavior as appropriate for the age of the children
4. Lastly, parents of both children involved in the incident will be notified.

Field Trips and Special Events

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of your child's curriculum. The staff will make every effort to schedule field trips during school hours. Teachers are expected to notify parents at least two weeks prior to a field trip. The preschool office is aware of all field trips that take place. Occasionally, room parents will call families with additional field trip information. Our toddler classes and two's do not participate in field trips outside of the building with the exception of walking/wagon trips in the neighborhood.

Parents are requested not to bring siblings on field trips. Siblings can only be brought with the approval of the director. If siblings are brought, parents have sole responsibility for their care.

Your voluntary participation as a driver will be appreciated by all concerned, especially your own child. All children must be in a car seat. Children may not be double seat-belted. All drivers must have proof of insurance.

Special Events

We do many special events throughout the year, specifically around holidays. All parents are notified by the director and/or the teachers via email or letter relating to any "special activity"

planned for the children in our school or in a specific classroom. All parents are welcome to attend the special activities. Parents are responsible for supervising their own children who do not attend the school during these special events.

Unscheduled School Closures

We notify news and radio stations any time we close unexpectedly. We will also send an email and/or text to each family. The director will contact classroom teachers who will then reach out to parents by phone or text.

If Denver Public Schools close for a storm, we will also close. However, there may be additional times when we decide to close. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

What to Wear

Children at school will get dirty, spill juice, drip paint, etc. School is where we do things that may be too messy to do at home. Dress your child appropriately. The children need to be comfortable while doing all kinds of activities at school.

Classes go outside each day (weather permitting). Your child needs appropriate outerwear for changeable weather. **Please label all clothes and outerwear, including boots.** When it is time for mittens, please have them hooked to jackets.

Sturdy clothes with simple fastenings will allow all children to be actively involved in all aspects of the programs. No open sandals, please. “Gym shoes” and socks are best.

Please provide the following as appropriate:

1. **Clothing:** Two changes of clothes appropriate for the season, plus an extra pair of shoes if possible. Additionally, please label and pack extra masks for children 3+.
2. **Sunscreen:** This must be applied before drop-off during warm weather. Our teachers will reapply after water activities and nap.
3. **Hats and Jackets:** Children wear hats when they play outside in cooler weather. Remember to label and provide seasonally appropriate hats and jackets/coats.

For more information, please [view our School Supplies and Essentials](#).

Excessively Hot/Cold Weather

On days when the weather is extremely hot, the preschool will refrain from playing outdoors and play in our indoor Fisher Hall. However, we do try to get outside as much as possible, and will play outside early in the morning before it gets too hot for the children. When it is extremely cold or wet outside, the children will play in Fisher Hall.

Reporting Suspected Abuse

As a child care facility, BMH-BJ Preschool staff members are legally obligated to report any suspected abuse. Additionally, if a parent suspects abuse, they should call the Colorado Department of Human Services at 720-944-3000. Complaints or compliments regarding our facility can be directed to the Division of Child Care at 303-866-5958.

Complaints

BMH-BJ is a fully licensed facility subject to “[Rules Regulating Child Care Centers](#),” issued by the Colorado Department of Human Services. We strive to provide a program which meets or exceeds the regulations issued by the department.

If you have any concerns about your child or teacher, please discuss your concerns with the teacher first. If you feel that you are not satisfied after speaking with them, feel free to discuss the problem with the director. If you have a complaint concerning suspected licensing violations, please contact: Division of Child Care, Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203, or call (303) 866-5958.

Financial

Tuition

We are charging families full day or half day based on your fall enrollment. Please contact us if you are experiencing any financial hardship and we will work with you to develop a tuition financial plan.

Withdrawal Policy

If your family has committed to returning to our school for fall, you will be charged tuition. We will not be issuing tuition refunds. It will be essential for us to have these policies in place in

order to be able to continue to operate our school and pay teachers and staff. If you have questions or concerns about this policy, please contact us at preschool@bmhbipreschool.org.

Fundraising

Julie Gelfond Preschool Fund

The fund was established by BMH-BJ to be used for any special (non-budgetary) purpose of the preschool. You may contribute to the fund for any occasion or remembrance such as birthdays (especially a child's birthday), anniversaries, special occasions, memorials, or any other life cycle event. All gifts to the Preschool Fund are greatly appreciated.

2023/2024 Calendar *Dates and events subject to change.*

AUGUST 2023

Thur 8/10 – Fri 8/18	Professional Development / Closed
Fri 8/18 @ 9-10:30 am	Preschool Open House / Meet the Teachers
Mon 8/21	First Day of School

SEPTEMBER 2023

Mon 9/4	Labor Day / Closed
Wed 9/6 @ 6 pm	Back-to-School Night
Fri 9/15	Rosh HaShanah / Closed
Tues 9/19 & Wed 9/20	Individual Pictures (retakes 9/28)
Mon 9/25	Yom Kippur / Closed
Fri 9/29	Sukkot / Closed

OCTOBER 2023

Wed 10/4	Pizza in the Hut / Time TBD
Fri 10/6	Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah / Closed
Fri 10/20	Fall Conferences / Closed (childcare during)

NOVEMBER 2023

Fri 11/3 @ 9:30 am	Grandparents & Special Friends Shabbat Party
Wed 11/22 – Fri 11/24	Thanksgiving Break / Closed

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday 12/10	Dreidels & Donuts / Recital & Art Auction
Mon 12/18 – Fri 12/29	Winter Break / Closed

JANUARY 2024

Mon 1/1	New Years Day / Closed
Tues 1/2	Annual ECE Conference / Closed
Wed 1/3	Preschool Resumes
Mon 1/15	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day / Closed
Thurs 1/25	Tu B'Shevat / School-wide Celebration

FEBRUARY 2024

Thurs 2/8 **Father's Breakfast and Mitzvah Project / Time TBD**
 Mon 2/19 **President's Day / Closed**

MARCH 2024

Fri 3/8 **Spring Conferences / Closed (childcare during)**
 Fri 3/22 **Purim School-wide Celebration**
 Sun 3/24 **Purim / Purim Carnival, Time TBD**

APRIL 2024

Mon 4/1 **Professional Development / Closed**
 Wed 4/10 & Thurs 4/11 **Class Pictures**
 Fri 4/19 **Passover School-wide Celebration**
 Mon 4/22 – Tues 4/30 **Passover / Closed**

MAY 2024

Mon 5/6 – Fri 5/10 **Teacher Appreciation Week**
 Fri 5/10 **Mother's Breakfast & Spring Sing / Time TBD**
 Mon 5/13 **Yom Haatzmaut / School-wide Celebration**
 Thurs 5/16 @ 9:30 am **Pre-K Graduation**
 Fri 5/24 **Last Day of School**

Summer Session 2024

Mon 5/27 **Memorial Day / Closed**
 Tues 5/28 **First Day of Summer Camp**
 Tues 6/11 **Shavuot / 12:30 Dismissal**
 Wed 6/12-Thurs 6/13 **Shavuot / Closed**
 Wed 6/19 **Juneteenth / Closed**
 Thurs 7/4 – Fri 7/5 **July 4th / Closed**
 Wed 8/7 **Last day of Camp**

Thurs 8/8 – 8/16 **Professional Development / Closed**
 Mon 8/19 **First Day of School 2024/2025**

Acknowledgement of Receipt

By signing this form, you acknowledge receipt of the 2023-2024 Parent Handbook from BMH-BJ Preschool, as well as the following waiver:

The Parent Handbook provides important information about how BMH-BJ Preschool operates, and we encourage you to review it carefully. Please note that the 2023-2024 Parent Handbook is subject to change. If the Handbook is changed, you may obtain a revised copy by visiting <https://bmhbjpreschool.org/resources/> or by requesting a copy from the preschool office.

I, _____, the parent of _____,

acknowledge receipt of the 2023-24 Parent Handbook, COVID-19 Handbook Addendum, and COVID-19 waiver from BMH-BJ Preschool.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent / Guardian)

Please sign and return this document either in printed format to the preschool at drop off or by filling out, scanning, and emailing to preschool@bmhbjpreschool.org by the first day of school (August 21, 2023).