



KADIMA
DAY SCHOOL
EVENHAIM FAMILY CAMPUS

Early Childhood Education Center Parent Handbook

2023-24
5784

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Dear Early Childhood Education Center Families,

Welcome to the ECEC, and your children's earliest steps at Kadima!

This handbook is designed to provide all of the information you need to make your child's year at the ECEC a safe, successful, and comfortable one. The systems, structures, and routines by which we achieve these goals are reviewed and strengthened yearly, so please read the handbook carefully.

Education is a partnership between home and school. In this partnership, you are the experts in knowing and understanding your child, and we are the experts in early childhood development and socialization. This handbook, our website (www.kadimadayschool.org), our weekly email newsletter (*Kol Echad*), and classroom newsletters are our primary communication vehicles from the school to home. Please be in touch with your children's teachers regularly to share your insights, your appreciation, and your concerns.

We look forward to working together with you to make this a year of tremendous learning and growth.

Bivrachah,

שלום הורים,

ברוכים הבאים לגן "קדימה"!

מדריך זה מיועד לספק את כל המידע הדרוש על-מנת להפוך את שהיית ילדכם בגן קדימה השנה להתנסות בטוחה, מוצלחת, ונוחה. הנהלים וההרגלים שבאמצעותם יושגו היעדים הנ"ל נבדקים ומחודשים מידי שנה, ולכן אתם מתבקשים לעיין היטב במדריך.

חינוך הינו פרי של שיתוף פעולה בין הורים ומורים. בשותפות זו, אתם המומחים בכל הקשור לילדכם, ואנחנו המומחים בהתפתחות הילד ובהתחברותו. מדריך זה, יחד עם אתר ביה"ס (www.kadimadayschool.org), העלון השבועי ("קול אחד"), ועלוני הכיתות הם הכלים המרכזיים של תקשורת מביה"ס לבית. אנא עימדו בקשר תכוף עם הגננות ושיתפו אותן בתובנות, בהוקרות, ובדאגות שלכם.

אנחנו מצפים לשיתוף פעולה פורה איתכם שיביא לשנת צמיחה ולימוד מדהימים.

בברכה,

Alisha Sela
ECEC Director

Dr. Steven Lorch
Head of School

I. KADIMA DAY SCHOOL MISSION & BELIEFS

Mission

Kadima Day School provides an integrated general and Judaic studies education that is comprehensive and academically challenging. Our commitment to educational excellence and Jewish tradition teaches our students to maximize their academic, social, physical and spiritual potentials. A Kadima education instills a strong sense of identity, preparedness for higher education and a commitment to responsible living guided by Jewish ethics and values.

Core Values

- Academic Rigor – חכמה – Students lay the foundation for success in high school, college, and beyond by immersing themselves in an enriched program of Judaic and general studies, which brings out the best in each student, with emphasis on 21st-century skills: critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
- Inspired Jewish Learning – לימוד תורה – Students internalize the Jewish knowledge, traditions, experiences, and values that are the building blocks of lifelong Jewish meaning and practice מדור לדור, from generation to generation.
- Social Responsibility – ואהבת לרעך כמוך – Students apply study to moral action. Guided by compassion and social responsibility, they create caring communities within their classrooms, across the entire school, and within the community at large.
- Community – קהילה – We welcome families to an inclusive school in which children, along with their parents, forge warm and caring relationships with their teachers and each other.
- Love of Israel and the Jewish People – אהבת ישראל – Students feel a strong kinship to the State of Israel, its people, its language and culture, and the Zionist enterprise, as well as a deep connection and sense of responsibility for the welfare of Jews around the world.

Early Childhood Education Center Vision

The Early Childhood Education Center celebrates and builds upon each child's strengths, interests, and experiences in an intentional and nurturing community that fosters experimentation, a love of learning, and respect for others. Our program facilitates growth and learning through a curriculum attuned to children's unique patterns of development. Our goal is for children to become responsible members of their classroom community and develop confidence and independence.

The ECEC steps to the rhythm of the Jewish calendar. It strives to imbue within children the joy of *Shabbat* and the Jewish holidays, a love of Hebrew and all things Jewish, and a sense of wonder and gratitude about the world around them.

II. JEWISH FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICES

At Kadima, children learn about religious practices both by engaging in them and by studying about them. We believe that their participation in a community of practice will enable them to discover their own personal connection to Jewish life.

The school does not attempt to regulate a family's home practice, except in those cases in which it impinges on the school community (for example, school lunches and birthday parties involving classmates). However, parents and school need to be attuned to responses that children may have from time to time to differences that they perceive between school practice and home practice and be prepared to help them negotiate their way between the two without disparaging or delegitimizing either.

A. Shabbat & Holidays

Shabbat is the day of rest from all creative labor and a day of spiritual renewal. *Shabbat* begins at sundown on Friday and continues through nightfall on Saturday. To promote the observance of *Shabbat* and Jewish holidays:

1. We do not offer after-school care on Fridays in order to allow families to fully prepare and welcome *Shabbat*.
2. We dismiss early on the eve of major holidays that require either extensive preparation at home or early synagogue attendance.
3. We do not promote or distribute publicity for any outside event scheduled on *Shabbat* or a Jewish holiday.
4. No work-related activities may be scheduled at Kadima on *Shabbat* or holidays.
5. No school-related business, other than events like *Shabbatonim* which encourage the observance of *Shabbat*, may be conducted on *Shabbat* or holidays.
6. American holidays, such as Thanksgiving, Presidents' Day, and Martin Luther King Day, are part of our school program. Halloween and Valentines Day, which are neither national holidays, nor of a Jewish origin, are not celebrated or observed at Kadima.

B. Kashrut

Jewish dietary laws are an integral part of the Jewish value system. *Kashrut* teaches reverence of life, a sense of community, and holiness – making the ordinary experience of eating extraordinary. The specific procedures regarding *kashrut* at Kadima are as follows:

1. Children will be provided with a morning and afternoon snack. All food will be prepared in our kosher kitchen by cooks who are experienced with kosher guidelines.
 - **Children are allowed to bring only dairy** (cheese, yogurt, milk-based foods) **or pareve** (fruit, fish, vegetables, *hummus*) lunches.
 - **No meat products or meat derivatives** may be brought to school. **The restriction on meat includes kosher meat and poultry.**
 - **All baked goods must have a *kashrut* symbol** indicating that it contains no lard or animal shortening.
2. **No foods prepared at home, even in kosher homes, may be brought to school to be shared with other students.** We do not want to be placed in the position of making determinations about the acceptability of *kashrut* in particular homes.
3. We welcome a celebration of your child's birthday at school. However, any treat that you bring for the class must be labeled kosher, and must be pareve (if it is being served on a day when lunch is meat). Treats may not be baked in a home, but they may be purchased at a kosher bakery. Although we enjoy celebrating your child's birthday at school, please save party favors for your home celebration.
4. The *kashrut* policy should be respected during off-campus birthday parties. It is required, as a minimum standard, that there is a kosher option available.

C. Integration of Judaic Content

One of our major goals is to develop, beginning with our youngest children, the ability to see the world through both Jewish and American "lenses." To achieve this goal, we make as many connections between Judaic and General studies as possible. Through the selection of storybooks and language arts, we help children understand the connections between Jewish traditions and the wider world in which we live. The Jewish values which we explore become integrated with learning to live as productive citizens in the United States and the world.

D. Israel and Zionism

Kadima embraces the traditional love for *Eretz Yisrael* as the land of our history and the birthplace of our way of life. We fully support the modern State of Israel, its people and government. Our early childhood classrooms resonate with symbols and reminders (posters, etc.) of Israel, and we fully embrace our Israel Independence Day celebration with crafts, songs, and foods of Israel.

E. Social Action (*Tikkun Olam* and *Tzedakah*)

Part of our mission as a Jewish school is to teach children their obligation to contribute to their community and to help those in need outside of their specific community. Throughout the year children will be asked to contribute *Tzedakah* and to perform acts of *chesed* (kindness) to support this educational goal. Projects will be both in class and outside of class.

III. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

A. Drop-off/Pickup Procedures

1. School schedule is 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Monday – Thursday and 9:00 AM – 2:45 PM Friday (No Aftercare on Friday). There will be free play from 8:45 AM -9:15 AM as all the children arrive.
2. Morning drop off will be from 8:45 AM - 9:00 AM. School begins at 9:00 AM. Children should arrive no later than 9:00 AM so they can begin their day in an unhurried way. Tardiness is disruptive to the program and places the child at a disadvantage.
3. Children may arrive as early as 7:40 AM entering through the ECEC gate.
4. All children arriving before 8:45 AM **MUST** pre-register for AM extended care with the finance office. This will allow us to provide adequate supervision to all children and comply with licensing regulations.
5. **Please note:** Students who arrive late will be admitted to school beginning at 9:45. Parents who arrive after the end of drop-off are welcome to park in the parking lot and wait with their child, or to leave and return at 9:45. At 9:45 please bring your child to the main office and sign them in through the Playground app.
6. In order to sign your child in and out, we will be using an app called Playground. You will receive more information from school about how to use this app for signing your child.
7. For your convenience, there is a “loading zone” for drop-off and pick-up only. As you pull to the front of the line a teacher will help your child from the car, make sure you have used the Playground app to sign your child in, and then escort your child into the ECEC area. At pickup time you will drive into the “loading zone” and wait in your car for a staff member to bring your child to the car. Please remain in your car while you are waiting for your child.
- 8.. Remember: **All ECEC students, by law, *MUST* be signed in and out each day at the gate. The signature must be a legal signature, and the time of drop-off and pickup must be noted.**
9. Pick up begins at 2:45pm and ends at 3:15pm. You must be signed up in advance in order to stay for Aftercare. **Aftercare ends promptly at 5:00 pm.** After 5:00 pm, you will be charged a \$10 fee up until 5:10pm and \$1 for every minute thereafter.
10. If you need to pick your child up early, please either contact Alisha or the front office with at least an hour's notice.

B. Exiting the Parking Lot

Left turns onto Shoup from the school are prohibited. Violation of this rule can result in the city revoking our “Conditional Use Permit.” If we lose our conditional use permit, Kadima may lose its ability to operate.

C. Traffic Safety and Parking

Our primary concern is safety. When dropping off or picking up children from school, please refrain from talking on your cell phone. Please follow the instructions of the traffic coordinators of the day. Failure to do so threatens the safety of our children and constitutes a serious breach of the relationship between parent and school.

D. Cell Phones and Other Electronics:

When dropping off or picking up children from school, please refrain from talking on your cell phone. This is a safety issue. Additionally, children benefit from having your undivided attention during such transition times.

E. Handicapped Parking

Handicapped parking is enforced by LAPD and is subject to a significant fine. Kadima Day School is not responsible for anyone violating this policy.

F. Conferences

Parent conferences are held twice a year, and additional individual conferences are available on an “as-needed” basis. The conferences provide an opportunity for parents to meet their child’s teachers and to receive a brief overview of their child’s progress.

IV. STANDARDS AT SCHOOL

- A. **Assemblies:** Throughout the year, the ECEC holds many assemblies to which families are invited. Assemblies provide an opportunity for children to demonstrate acquired knowledge. They are also a time for parents to publicly show their support for their children and the entire Kadima community. Parents will be informed of such events in advance.

V. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- 1. We are required by state law to have frequent and unannounced drills.
- 2. Students will be taught the different drills and procedures.
- 3. When a signal occurs, all students will leave their locations in an orderly manner with no talking or running.
- 4. Students will follow teachers' instructions.
- 5. Parents who are on campus during a fire or earthquake drill must help set a good example by participating in the drill and following school instructions.

VI. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- 1. Everyone at Kadima bears responsibility for the appearance of the school campus. Each person is responsible for picking up trash which has been dropped by themselves or others.
- 2. Drinks in glass bottles are *not* permitted on campus.

VII. LOST AND FOUND

Parents should check the lost and found box regularly. Periodically we will display these items during carpool. Your child's lunch box, water bottle, and outer garments should be clearly labeled with both first and last name. Labeled items will be directly returned to the child. Unclaimed property will be donated to charities.

VIII. COMMUNICATION

1. As parents and faculty, we often discuss sensitive issues. As models to our children and as an educational community, all our communications must be guided by civility and respect. It is generally not appropriate to conduct parent/faculty discussions in the presence of the child, whether in person or by phone.
2. Teachers' first responsibility during the day is the safety and care of the children in their charge. Please help them by refraining from initiating a discussion when the teacher is teaching, on duty, or in the parking lot. To protect confidentiality, please do not discuss your child in the presence of other children or parents.
3. If you must get a message to your child's teacher during school hours, please contact the main office at (818) 346-0849.
4. Please make sure that you communicate each day before school with your child regarding pick-up arrangements. If your child is going to be picked up by an adult who is not authorized on your forms, you **MUST** send a signed note to school identifying the name of the person authorized to sign your child out of school. Without your written authorization, we are not able to release a child to anyone who is not on your authorization form.
5. Concerns regarding a child should be first communicated to the child's teacher, who knows your child best and is in the best position to respond.
6. The school sends an electronic newsletter, "Kol Echad," each Thursday regarding special programs, announcements and general information. These are a key communication link between home and school.
7. Teachers and administrative staff are not always immediately available when you call. They will return your call as soon as possible, and within 24 hours.
8. Please respect the staff's right to family time by not phoning staff at home to conduct school business. If you have an issue that arises in the evening, email the staff member or leave a message on the school answering machine, and the appropriate staff person will respond to you as soon as possible.
9. It takes a community of ambassadors to spread the word about Kadima. Please share your appreciation of the school, your child's teachers, and your child's growth and learning with everyone you know, as often as possible! By the same token, please address any concerns with the teacher or administrator who can best help, and refrain from discussing them with others with no need to know.

IX. PARTIES OUT OF SCHOOL

1. **Avoid Hurt Feelings:** No child should be singled out for omission. You may choose to invite one child from the class, but if you want to invite more than one, please invite all boys, or all girls, or all children.
2. **Kashrut:** In planning a party, please be sensitive to the school culture and ethos and ensure that a kosher option is available.
3. **Never on Shabbat or Holidays:** In the same spirit of upholding school values, parties should not be held on *Shabbat* (between Friday at sunset and Saturday after nightfall) or Jewish holidays.

X. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Professional development days (pupil-free days) provide the opportunity for teachers to grow individually and as an educational community. Kadima faculty development and professional growth directly benefit your child and support the following goals:

- To explore and process new educational ideas and trends
- To plan and to evaluate programs and curricula
- To develop and implement a shared vision
- To provide continuing teacher education which enhances children's learning and well-being

XI. Dress

Students are asked to wear Kadima-logoed attire on Wednesdays for Spirit Day.

On Fridays, in honor of *Shabbat*, all students are asked to wear white Kadima shirts, white collared shirts, or white dresses.

XII. HEALTH AND MEDICAL POLICIES

All students enrolled at Kadima must have an annual physical examination and all immunizations required by the California Department of Health (<https://www.shotsforschool.org/>). Children will be excluded from school if they do not meet these requirements.

Each morning before departing for school, parents should assess their children to ensure that they are healthy enough to attend the full day's program, including recess and physical education. In particular, they should determine if a child has Covid-19 symptoms (new cough, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea). If any of these symptoms are present, or if the child has had a fever in the past 24 hours, the child should not attend school.

If a child is ill or injured, parents will be notified immediately. If a child develops Covid-19 symptoms during the day, the child will be isolated until a parent can pick the child up. Please ensure that your contact information is up to date and that the school has multiple methods of contacting each parent. Parents are asked to ensure that the medical records and emergency information on file in the school office are kept current.

As a rule, school personnel cannot assume responsibility for administering medication to children. If a child requires prescription medicine during the day, parents should address their request in writing to the school nurse and enclose documentation from the child's doctor. The medication must be brought to school in its original labeled container, stating the child's name, drug, dosage, and time to be administered. On the medical information form submitted at the beginning of each school year, parents may request that the school administer non-prescription medication for pain relief (Tylenol or Advil) or allergies (Benadryl). Children are never permitted to administer their own medication without adult supervision.

When a child contracts a contagious disease, the school must be notified at once. As appropriate, this information may be shared with the parents of other children. In addition, if the child tests positive for Covid-19, the school will contact the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for further guidance. Students with contagious diseases of any kind (strep throat, influenza, Covid-19, etc.) may not return to school until the child has been fever free and symptom free for 24 hours. For example, if a child has been fever free and symptom free since Monday at noon, s/he should nonetheless remain home on Tuesday and not return until at least Wednesday.

Further, we ask that, in the case of illness, even a cold, parents be conservative about returning their child to school. Unfortunately, too often students come back and present a further risk to themselves, their classmates, and their teachers.

The school does periodic lice checks on students' hair. In accordance with policies of the National Association of School Nurses and the American Academy of Pediatrics, as well as in keeping with current Los Angeles public school procedures, any child with live lice will be asked to leave school until all lice have been removed. Children with nits (lice eggs) will not be sent home or excluded from school; parents will be notified and advised how to perform the

necessary head wash at home, and the school will monitor until all nits have been successfully removed.

Allergies

If a child has an allergy that the school needs to be aware of and/or to monitor, it is the parents' responsibility to alert the school in careful detail to the nature and severity of the allergy and the steps that school personnel may be required to take to manage a reaction. This information should be listed on the medical information form submitted at the beginning of the school year. In the case of a life-threatening allergy, a food allergy action plan must be completed by the child's pediatrician. This can be downloaded at:
<https://www.foodallergy.org/sites/default/files/migrated-files/file/emergency-care-plan.pdf>.

In consultation with the child's doctor, the school is prepared to adapt the school environment in order to reduce the risk of exposure to life-threatening substances, including providing allergen-controlled areas, establishing safe eating-area procedures, and taking special precautions during events such as holiday celebrations, and extracurricular events.

Members of the school staff have been trained in emergency response to allergic reactions.

XIII. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

A. Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO recruits room parents, supports holiday celebrations, raises funds to purchase various school items, and implements a number of family programs during the year. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities that allow parents with limited time and/or financial resources to participate. By getting involved, parents have the opportunity to further the school's mission through numerous volunteer activities and to become a part of a dynamic group of parents. Parents interested in getting involved should email pto@kadimadayschool.org for more information.

B. The Board of Trustees

The Kadima Board of Trustees is the governing body of our school. The Board of Trustees sets policy and has both fiduciary and legal responsibility for the operation of the school, but is not responsible for the school's day-to-day management. The school administration (Head of School and ECEC Director) is responsible for day-to-day management.

C. Giving Opportunities

Student tuition and fees cover about 75% of the actual cost of educating a child at Kadima. The remaining funding is raised through fundraising efforts. Therefore, please think of Kadima when you want to acknowledge a birthday, anniversary, graduation, milestone, or a "Refuah Sheleimah" (speedy recovery).

Every family can contribute to Kadima's fundraising efforts, and each class strives to achieve 100% participation. Whether you have the ability to donate \$18 or \$18,000, your involvement is critical to Kadima's success. Major donors from the wider Jewish community often ask whether the parents support the school, and our 100% participation is a great selling point to them!

The two major opportunities you have to donate are the fall Annual Campaign and the spring Gala. In addition to your direct donation, we welcome your volunteer work toward these campaigns, as well as your approaching relatives and friends to support your child's school.

D. Volunteer Opportunities

Parents are welcome to volunteer in the classroom, one at a time by prior arrangement. Parent visitors may be asked to wear a mask, depending on the rate of community transmission at the time of the visit.

E. Parent Education

Throughout the year, parent education classes on topics of general and Jewish interest are made available to you. Your participation sets an important example of lifelong learning for your child, strengthens your connection to the school and other parents, and offers new and thought-provoking insights into parenting and Jewish life.