



Academic Year 2020-2021, 5781

**THIS HANDBOOK SHOULD BE READ
ALONGSIDE THE
[2020-21 REOPENING PLAN](#)**

אין העולם מתקיים אלא בשביל הבל תינוקות של בית רבן
**"The world is sustained by the pure vapors of breath
of young children of beit rabban (*tinokot shel beit rabban*)."**

-The Babylonian Talmud; Shabbat 119b

"*Beit Rabban*" is the term used in classical Jewish texts for a school where children encounter the wisdom of the Sages, a dynamic considered essential to rich Jewish life and the guarantee of the community's future. Our school's name reflects our conviction that learning is a basic Jewish act and that Jewish children are entitled to be fluent in the texts and traditions of our heritage. The future of our people depends on the education of our children to be knowledgeable, thoughtful, and responsible participants in their world.

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MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

Mission Statement:

Beit Rabban is an innovative day school, creating a model of an open Jewish learning community comprised of diverse Jewish families who are all passionately committed to Jewish life. At the heart of our education is a focus on the whole child and an interdisciplinary curriculum that empowers students to master the necessary skills for text-study and problem solving. Children learn in small groups that emphasize critical inquiry, experiential learning, self-reflection and collaboration. Beit Rabban graduates are responsible and respectful citizens, well equipped for rigorous academic environments and beyond as lifelong Torah learners and independent thinkers.

Core Values:

1. We value diversity of opinion as a tenet of the Jewish tradition, and students are encouraged to honor and respect the views of others.
2. We are progressive in curricular orientation, constantly culling from the best of current academic practices.
3. Faculty recognizes the spark in each child, nurtures creative expression of all kinds, and empowers students to become agents of their own learning.
4. Hebrew language is at the core of our curriculum. Beyond mastering the Hebrew of ancient Jewish texts, students learn to read, write and speak Modern Hebrew as a second near-native language.
5. We engage students in a dynamic relationship with Israel and emphasize its significance to the Jewish people, our history and practice.
6. Classroom environment encourages children to authentically respond to their learning, with teachers fostering students' moral, spiritual and intellectual growth.
7. Students learn the value of meaningful community service and are encouraged to create and participate in class- and school-wide service projects.
8. We are a caring community and actively supports the endeavor of parenting.



EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (THE GAN)

Building a Jewish Learning Community in Partnership with Parents

The Gan at Beit Rabban, our early childhood program, is infused with the foundational values and mission of our entire school. It provides a meaningful and compelling early childhood environment for contemporary Jewish families seeking the highest quality education for their children. In the Gan, teachers and parents work together in partnership to gain a deeper understanding of each individual child. In a warm, creative and intellectually stimulating environment, the Gan at Beit Rabban:

- Provides an environment in which the key processes of early childhood development are nurtured, with the building blocks for growth as the primary focus of concern.
- Facilitates healthy social and emotional development, helping the children to develop confidence in themselves as competent individuals and as learners.
- Promotes intellectual development and builds the foundations necessary for learning readiness across the curriculum.
- Fosters age-appropriate physical and language skills development.

Building Relationships in the Beginning of the School Year

Separation and Attachment

Children in early childhood classes work hard in the first few weeks of school forming attachments and bonding with their teachers and new friends. In order to ease the separation from home and the transition into the children's new classes (a) the Gan teachers start to develop personal relationships with the children at the end of the summer before school starts through home and classroom visits, and (b) all Gan classes are on a staggered start schedule over the first week of school.

Transitional Objects

Children are welcome to bring small transitional items to school that connect them to home such as photos or other small items that do not make sounds or light up. These will be kept in the children's cubbies and taken out when needed. Please remember to label these items.

Starting the School Day in the Gan

A thoughtfully planned morning routine and arrival at school is important for every child and can have a significant impact on their experience at school each day.

Changing Dismissal Times in the Gan

Teachers will have the information from the forms you complete during the summer regarding who has permission to pick up your child from school. If your child will be picked up by anyone other than the individuals named on your pick-up form, we must have written notification from you via email to the business office by noon. Please make sure that person has photo identification. It is also helpful to inform the teachers on that day if there is a new person for pickup. Please note that for the safety of your child, we will not release your child to anyone not listed on their pick-up form without express written permission. If the list of adults who pick up your child changes during the year, please inform the school office and change your preferences on RenWeb. If your child will need to be picked up early on a given day, please notify classroom teachers as well as the main office via email as early in the day as possible.

Toilet Training

We understand that young children may not be fully toilet trained by the start of school. Our goal is for children to become toilet trained as quickly as possible, and teachers will be supportive in this process. Our policy is that children who are three years of age or older should be almost or fully toilet trained. Parents of children who are newly toilet trained should speak with the teachers at the start of the school year to discuss ways to support this process. While children are adjusting to school it may be appropriate for them to wear pull-ups at school.

Change of Clothes

Children in *Gan* and *Garinim* are required to keep a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing in school. Please bring this to school on the first day of school and change or replace it as necessary. Please remember to include a pair of socks. Children's clothing must be labeled with their names and will be kept in their classrooms.

Future Placement & Kindergarten

We appreciate that each child develops in an individual manner and that chronological age is not always the most appropriate indicator to determine placement for current or future years. We also very much value the experience that children have in the Gan and know that for many an additional year in the Gan can be a gift that will last a lifetime, ensuring that the child is fully ready, not only for the opportunities of kindergarten, but also for subsequent academic years.

In the winter, parents of children who will turn five anytime between June 1 and December 1 will be contacted to discuss placement for the coming fall. Depending upon the child, a decision about placement with the incoming kindergarten class may be postponed to see how the second half of the school year unfolds.

We do invite all parents in the Gan to contact Rachel Feinerman (rachel@beitrabban.org), Director of Admissions, to schedule a time to visit our wonderful kindergarten program.



KEVUTZOT AND THE CHATIVAH

KEVUTZOT: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)

CHATIVAT BEIT RABBAN (The Chativah): MIDDLE SCHOOL (5th – 8th Grade)

Beit Rabban's elementary is comprised of student units called *Kevutzot*, or groups, which share a common classroom community. These are flexible small groupings tailored to the educational needs of each child in different subject areas such as Hebrew, and students participate in both large group and small group learning throughout the day at Beit Rabban.

The names of Kevutzot classes capture the different stages in the growth of a tree, starting with a seed (*garin*), the sprouting of the root (*shoresh*), the growth of the shoot (*shatil*), and the extension of the branch (*anaf*). Once children enter 5th grade they begin Chativat Beit Rabban, or the Chativah. Chativah classes include the presentation of the bud (*nitzan*), the blooming of the flower (*perach*), the ripening of the fruit (*rimon*, *pomegranate*), and ultimately the presentation of first fruit (*bikurim*). For the 2019-2020 school year, the Kevutzot will include *Garinim* (kindergarten), *Shorashim* (first grade), *Shtillim* (second grade), *Anafim* (third grade), *Alim* (fourth grade), *Nitzanim* (fifth grade), *Prachim* (sixth grade), *Rimonim* (seventh grade), and *Bikurim* (eighth grade).

In the early elementary grades the children are introduced to the dispositions, attitudes and interactions central to the school's vision of education – shared discourse and interpretive discussion, problem solving, respect for one another, love of learning, the joy of development and mastery of basic skills. They are engaged in a unique natural language program in Hebrew and they read and write in workshop settings, which allow for a shared literacy experience while enabling each child to move ahead at a pace appropriate for him or her. In the later elementary grades, a mixture of single grade classes and smaller, mixed age learning groups create a dynamic social learning community in which students can learn from one another, be role models for each other, take on varied leadership roles and responsibilities within the classroom, and recognize and appreciate their own talents and strengths as well as those of others.

A full guide to the Beit Rabban's Kevutzot Curriculum is available on our website at <http://www.beitrabban.org/education/our-curriculum/> and Chativah Curriculum is available on our website at <http://www.beitrabban.org/education/middle-school/>.

Arrival and Dismissal

Please see the Reopening Plan 2020 for specific details with respect to arrival and dismissal this year.

Dismissal Authorization and Changes in Plans

If your child will be picked up by anyone other than the individuals named on your pick-up form, even if your child will be going home with a classmate, we must have written notification from you via an email to the business office by noon. Please note that for the safety of your child, we will not release your child to anyone not listed on their pickup form without express written permission. You can amend the list of adults who pick up your child at any time by logging into your RenWeb account.

Early Release Procedure

If your child will need to be picked up early on a given day, please notify the Business Office in writing by noon that day. Parents should go to the Business Office, not the classroom, to pick up their child. **This is important for security and in case of emergency when we need to know the location of each child.**

Self-Dismissal – 4th Grade and Middle School Only

Students in 4th grade and older may self-dismiss with the permission of their parents, the permission of the school, and the signing of a release by their parents. Students who self-dismiss join their classmates in the regular dismissal process and then notify the teacher responsible for the group dismissal of their departure. Once the student has self-dismissed, they must leave the building and are no longer under the supervision of their teachers or the school. For more information and a copy of the release form, email our Business Office at admin@beitrabban.org.

Placement in Learning Groups

During the first few weeks of school, students will participate in assessments in various subjects including Hebrew. Student will be assigned to small Hebrew learning groups according to their level. These groups may be cross-grade and are flexible. You will receive a letter informing you of your child's Hebrew learning group teachers. Over the course of the year, students will be reassessed in a formal manner on a periodic basis and may be moved to a different group that better serves their educational needs. The findings of these assessments are shared with parents twice a year through written progress reports and during parent-teacher conferences.

Homework

The main purpose of homework is to provide an opportunity for the children to review and practice what they have learned in school. In older grades, particularly in Middle School, students will also need homework to follow through on research projects. Homework also offers children an opportunity to develop skills for being responsible for their materials and their work, studying independently, and planning their time. Given these goals, homework should not consume too much family or play time neither create a stressful home experience.

Students generally have homework Monday through Thursday beginning with maximum 10 minutes per night in *Shorashim* (First Grade), 20 minutes per night for *Shtillim* (Second Grade), and 30 minutes per night for *Anafim* (Third Grade) and *Alim* (Fourth Grade). Please be in touch with your child's teacher if your child's homework assignments are taking significantly more time or less time than these guidelines.

In Middle School, students should expect to work at home every night on a mix of short term and long-term assignments. The amount of time that they will spend on a given evening will vary, but should not generally exceed 1 hour.

In grades 1-4, students will have a Home-School folder that includes homework as well as returned assignments. This year we have added Seesaw to the mix, and homework assignments will often be posted directly to Seesaw in grades 1-4 and on Google Classroom in the Chativah.

Reading at Home

All students in K-8 should be reading every night as a routine. We do not consider this homework, we consider this a habit, which we ask families to help us create and sustain. Students should know that reading is a lifelong habit, so we strongly encourage you to create reading time where you read to your child, and read alongside your child. While students in first grade may only be able to sustain 10 minutes of independent reading at first, we encourage all students to grow in their stamina to be able to read for longer periods of time. It is our job to teach your child *how* to read, but we work together with you to help your child develop a *love* of reading. One way families can help is to not try to make reading time instructional time, but rather create routines that are joyful where your child has agency in choosing what to read, and where you model excitement towards the shared reading experience.

Assessments

We are committed to regular assessment and documentation of students' learning in all grades. Assessments are a tool to ensure that teachers and students themselves are aware of what they are learning and what they are not learning. Teachers design both formative and summative assessments in each unit of study that: (a) provide information about how students learn and determine what knowledge and skills they have acquired and understood; (b) ascertain whether learning outcomes are in alignment with curriculum objectives and goals; (c) act as a feedback mechanism for curriculum development.

In Kevutzot, assessments come in many forms, and different disciplines are better suited to different forms of assessment. For example, assessing math skills may be best done through a quiz or test, even one that is timed; assessing understanding in Humanities or Science may be best assessed through a long or short-term project; and assessing Hebrew fluency may be best assessed through a one on one conversation with the

teacher. Some types of assessment tools are also learning tools, but some are not, often depending on the subject matter. Tests that require studying to succeed often do not advance student learning or provide a trustworthy assessment of students' learning, especially in elementary grades. For this reason, we use very few tests to assess student learning in the Kevutzot.

The Chativah (Middle School) uses exams and quizzes as two assessment tools among many others, as opposed to at the end of every unit of study across disciplines or at midterm and finals intervals. Other assessment tools include: essays, projects, discussions, presentations, research papers and the like. When such exams are given, they are followed by structured reflection between the teacher who administered the exam and the student who completed it, so both have a clear understanding of what they have learned from the student's exam results as well as how and whether this understanding should affect the student's learning plan going forward.



COMMUNICATIONS

Communication between School and Home

We work to ensure that all parents feel welcome in the school building and the school community, informed and connected to their child's school experience, and comfortable reaching out to teachers and administrators at any time. We employ a variety of tools to encourage open and comfortable communication between school and home including:

- Class Google Site
- Class Journal
- Monthly Outreach
- Home-School Folders in Kevutzot
- Ta Shma, our weekly newsletter
- Curriculum Night
- Parent-Child Survey
- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Parent Breakfasts by Class
- Progress Reports
- Celebrations of Learning by Grade
- School programs to which families are invited
- Community celebrations outside school hours

Each of these is described below, but we recognize that the most important thing for a trusting relationship between home and school is a parent's ability to reach out directly to a teacher or administrator for a quick email exchange, a phone call, or, this year, a Zoom meeting. We encourage parents to do this and truly welcome all these opportunities for learning about your child and deepening our partnership toward their growth. Whenever you reach out to a teacher, you can expect to receive a response within 24 hours. Please note that teachers do not always have time to check their email during school hours. Information on how, who, and when to contact teachers and administrators is also included below.

Class Google Site

During the first week of school, parents will receive information about their child's class Google site. This site will be updated with class journals, photographs and homework assignments.

Class Journal

Teachers in all grades email parents Class Journals. The purpose of the Class Journals is twofold. First, to provide you with a small window into their school learning at that

moment so you can engage with them about their school experience. Second, teachers use the Class Journals to share reminders and deadlines. At the end of the week, teachers also include a link to the week's photos for you to enjoy. The Class Journals is not meant as an individual record of any specific child or as a summary of all the day's learnings and experiences. It is truly a taste, so you have a springboard for conversation with your child and can ask about a specific experience rather than the often-difficult exchange that begins with "How was your day?" Should you want to know more about anything referenced in the Class Journals or about your child in particular, please email your child's teacher directly.

Class Journal in the Gan: Class Journals in the Gan are posted on Class Google Sites on a daily basis, and tend to provide more information than in later years because younger students may be less inclined or capable of sharing with their parents at the end of a day or, in some cases, may go to sleep before a parent's work day ends.

Class Journal in Kevutzot & Chativah: Class Journals are posted on Classroom Google Sites each Friday before Shabbat. Chativah journals are written by the students themselves.

Monthly Outreach

Parents and teachers are encouraged to be in touch and keep open lines of communication. In addition to this organic communication, teachers will also be reaching out to parents each month to briefly check in about their child's progress overall.

1st-4th Grade: The Home - School Folder & Seesaw

First through fourth grade Kevutzot students are given a homework folder at the beginning of the year, which they will take home each afternoon and bring back to school every morning. All homework, projects, activities, books, and letters to parents will be brought home in these folders. Anything that needs to be brought to class, including parents' notes to teachers, should be sent to school in the folders. This allows children to be responsible for bringing items home and to class and to have a simple way of keeping track of their work. Please check the contents of the folder with your child each evening and remove items that have been moved to the "remain at home" side. Return anything that needs to go to school to the folder and make certain it is packed up so that it returns to class.

***Ta Shma*: The Weekly Newsletter**

On a weekly basis, you will receive an email update, which will inform you about school events, describe aspects of our school's approach, and share stories about the teaching and learning occurring throughout the school at key moments during the cycle of the year. *Ta Shma* also provides a rolling calendar of important deadlines and noteworthy community events and holidays.

RenWeb

Beit Rabban Day School uses the RenWeb Alert platform to communicate with parents during emergencies and to send urgent information. Parents will receive an email, phone messages and text message from the Beit Rabban RenWeb Alert system for registration purposes; after adding basic contact information, parents can determine all the ways they wish to be contacted in an urgent or emergency situation: by email, voice mail, text. The school uses this platform only when there is an urgent message such as the closing of school due to snow, a late bus, an urgent deadline, or if the phone system is down. We encourage parents to select the maximum number of ways to be contacted to ensure these messages get through in a timely manner.

Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night is held for each class within the first few weeks of the school. At this event, classroom teachers share an overview of the curriculum map for the grade as well as any important classroom procedures or rituals that parents should know. Parents also have the opportunity to meet new families, reconnect with returning families, and ask teachers general questions. Given the limited time, this is not an opportunity for parents to engage in conversation about their individual children. Curriculum night is also an opportunity to hear from the Head of School about plans for the new year and to reconnect with our mission and community. If you are not able to attend all your children's classroom meetings, please reach out directly to their teachers for the material shared.

- The schedule for Curriculum Night this year is as follows:
- Tuesday, September 22 ; 7:40-8:45- Gan Kachol, Gan Varod, and Garinim
- Wednesday, Sept 23; 7:40-9:00 - Shorashim, Shtillim
- Thursday, September 24; 7:40-8:45 - Anafim, Alim
- Tuesday, September 29; 7:40-9:00 - Chativah (Nitzanim, Prachim, Rimonim)

Parent-Child Surveys

Each family has received a parent-child survey to be completed by August 23rd. These surveys are an opportunity for you to share anything about your child that you want their teacher to know. This may include hopes, concerns, ideas etc. Please note that teachers may follow up by phone over the first weeks of school to discuss what you shared. We encourage you to share anything of relevance even if you have already shared it with prior teachers or school administrators. While we have a very thoughtful system in place for ensuring that your child's new teacher is aware of important information- including information related to medical conditions, academics, and group dynamics- we believe it is critical for teachers to hear your thoughts directly from you as early on in their relationship with your child as possible.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for mid-fall and for mid-spring. At the first conference, the focus is developing shared goals for the students learning experience, understanding any concerns, and an initial assessment of the start of the

year. At the second conference, the teachers will be able to provide more details as to the social and academic growth of the child.

Please note that Middle School students will be joining conferences in the second semester of each year.

Parent Breakfasts

Parent Breakfasts are scheduled by class for the fall (please see calendar for specific dates) with the Head of School, Principal and representative of the Board of Trustees. These breakfasts are an opportunity for parents to share feedback early in the school year with administrators and board representation. The Head of School and Principal then share relevant feedback (positive and critical) with teachers with enough time for course correction if necessary. Administrators and board representatives also listen for troupes to gauge whether there are larger cross-school issues or opportunities to be addressed.

**** Parent Breakfasts will be held online during the 5781 school year.*

Progress Reports

Progress Reports come out toward the end of January and at the end of the school year. They include information about the child's growth in a wide range of areas, including social-emotional growth and content areas. These reports also include comment sections to explain further the student's development in different subject areas. The Progress Reports are used exclusively as a means of communication between the school and the parent and as a shared record of progress. When children prepare for admissions to another school, Beit Rabban prepares a more formal report outlining specific assessments.

Celebrations of Learning

Interdisciplinary studies are a hallmark of a Beit Rabban education, with students spending up to a semester learning about a big idea through various disciplinary lenses. These units of study culminate with Celebrations of Learning. Parents and family are invited to join one Celebration of Learning a year per grade, a beautiful way to engage directly with your child's newfound expertise. We intentionally limit parent involvement to one culmination per grade because we recognize that there is also benefit to student-only celebrations where each grade invites their peers in other grades to learn from them. Parents are invited to the following Celebrations of Learning, precise dates of which are available in Appendix A:

- Gan Midyear Shabbat/Chanukah Celebrations
- Gan End of Year Culminations
- Garinim (K) Mid-Year Culmination
- Shorashim (1st) Siddur Celebration
- Shtillim (2) Torah Reading Ceremony
- Anafim (3) Wax Museum
- Alim (4) End of Year Culmination

- Nitzanim (5) Heritage Fair
- Prachim (6) TBD
- Rimonim (7) TBD

****Celebrations of Learning will be held online during the 5781 school year.*

School Programs to which Community is invited

In addition to grade specific Celebrations of Learning, all parents, grandparents, caregivers and alumni are invited to join other meaningful school programs throughout the year including:

- Torah Reading Ceremony
- Martin Luther King Day Tefillah
- Someone Special Day
- Yom Haatzmaut Zimriyah (singalong)
- Last Day of School Beit Rabban B'yachad Assembly

These communal events that occur during the school day are also live-streamed on Facebook for parents and other family members to watch in real time.

In addition, our whole school joins together for Shabbat B'Yachad each Friday. This year, family members are welcome to join Shabbat B'Yachad online from 1:20-1:40PM each Friday.

****Community Events will be held online during the 5781 school year.*

Contacting Teachers and Administrators

Telephone and Email

Beit Rabban's office phone number is (212) 595-1386. The school office can be reached by dialing 0 or selecting Extension 100. Messages are checked frequently. If the voicemail picks up, please leave a message. Beit Rabban's phone will be answered Monday through Thursday from 7:45AM until 4:30PM and Fridays until 2:30PM. The Administrative Associate can also be reached by email during these hours at admin@beitrabban.org. In the event of an emergency after hours, parents and caregivers should **call** or **text** the Beit Rabban **emergency phone number at (646) 362-7444**.

For a list of administrator and teacher emails and phone numbers, please see the staff page of the Beit Rabban website.

While we encourage you to reach out anytime, please note that teachers are not always able to respond to emails during the school day as they are often scheduled to be in meetings during their prep periods. If you need to get a time sensitive message to a teacher during the day, please call or email our business office. You can expect to receive a response from your child's teacher within 24 hours.

We encourage you to communicate by email only to the extent that you need to share logistical information, a quick update or to schedule a time to speak. Conversations about children are far more effective when had over the phone or in person, if the thing you want to share with a teacher is better suited to a conversation, please reach out via email to set up a time to speak and share the basic topic to be discussed.

A note about email communication in general... this mode of communication obviously leaves a lot to be desired. While we aim for a direct relationship between teachers and parents, we should all err on the side of extra respect and sensitivity while sending emails. It is ALWAYS worth rereading an email before sending.

Communication between Multi-Home Families and Teachers/Administrators

If your child lives in a multi-home family, please share this information with the Head of School and COO so we can ensure that communication is always properly shared, including in compliance with any relevant legal framework.

Social Media

- **Facebook**

We invite all parents to like the school's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/beitrabbandayschool/> and to join the parents group on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/beitrabbanpa/>. The parent group page also serves as a place where parents can post information to other parents regarding non-Beit Rabban community events of interest, tzedakah opportunities, requests for childcare, etc.

- **Instagram** - Follow our *NEW* school Instagram @beitrabban

Which Administrator Do I Contact and When?

Our administration strives to forge relationships of trust with parents, and we recognize that being accessible is a key component of that. If you have a question or concern, please use the information below to guide your communication. If you are not sure who to connect with, you can always reach out to our Head of School, Stephanie Ives.

- **Stephanie Ives - Head of School**

Stephanie leads the team at Beit Rabban, working closely with the senior staff and the Board to help guide the school through the days, weeks and year. Specific responsibilities including supervising the educational and administrative leadership, medium and long-term planning as the school grows, managing new initiatives ensuring the financial resources to support the school, and interacting with community and organizational leaders. Go to Stephanie when you have concerns, questions or suggestions about the direction of the school, wish to raise a private concern, or are not certain who is the right person on the staff with whom to speak.

- **Ingrid Goldfein - Principal**

Ingrid is the school's instructional leader. She is responsible for the curriculum and the supervision of the faculty. Ingrid also works with the children to help them make good choices and to build a caring and thoughtful educational community. Ingrid frequently meets with parents to discuss concerns regarding challenges at school or opportunities for enrichment. Go to Ingrid when you have concerns, questions or suggestions about academic studies, including math, literacy, science or social studies; if you're concerned about a learning issue or a social dynamic in the classroom; or if you wish to share a concern or some positive feedback about your child's teacher.

- **Nicole Weiss - Chief Operating Officer**

Nicole oversees the administrative areas of the school, including tuition contracts and payments, invoices for various programs and services, payments to vendors, and reporting to the Finance Committee. Nicole also oversees payroll, provides for the human resource needs of the school employees and assists with marketing and development. In addition, Nicole supervises facilities and office staff to ensure a smooth implementation of our administrative needs. Go to Nicole when you have concerns, questions or suggestions regarding communications from school, payments, receipts for tax purposes of flexible spending accounts, need a copy of a contract or need help with FACTS for financial aid or tuition.

- **Shlomit Levy – Director of Student Support**

Sara works primarily with our students and faculty, providing support for individual children or groups that need new strategies for behavioral, social or learning challenges. Sara is also the point person who coordinates additional services that individual students receive, such as speech or occupational therapy. To do this, she will often help parents identify a specific resource or participate in a phone call with a specialist or the Department of Education. Go to Sara if you have concerns, questions, or suggestions regarding your child's learning experience or their social-emotional wellbeing, or if you are looking for suggestions for outside resources that can help your child as a student or you as a parent.

If you would like to learn more about the backgrounds of our administration, teachers or staff, please take a quick look at [their bios on our web page](#).



DERECH ERETZ

Derech Eretz – Mutual Respect and Character Education

Derech Eretz is a classic Jewish ideal of promoting respect and positive social relationships in society. At Beit Rabban we work with children to foster the ideals of *derech eretz* - respect for oneself, for one's family, for one's friends, for one's teachers, and for one's school. It is our belief that children can only take the intellectual risks associated with learning when they are in a safe and caring environment, which requires that all staff members also to conduct themselves with *derech eretz*.

In pursuit of a school community that embodies the values of *derech eretz*, Beit Rabban employs a methodology to guide character development and behavior management called Positive Discipline. Positive Discipline is a program developed by Dr. Jane Nelson “designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Positive Discipline teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is deeply respectful and encouraging for both children and adults.” Positive Discipline aligns with Beit Rabban’s core values, including helping children to feel a sense of belonging and significance; inviting children to discover their strengths and capabilities; spending adequate time teaching social and life skills to students; devoting ourselves to understanding the root of misbehavior and looking for long-term solutions to misbehavior rather than offering short-term rewards or punishments. Positive Discipline informs our practice with regard to social emotional learning, classroom management, and community building. Teachers and staff facilitate regular “community meetings” to teach valuable social and life skills. In addition, teachers and staff utilize Positive Discipline tools and language to help create a respectful, kind and caring community. Beit Rabban's behavior management system is based on Positive Discipline methodology and allows for reflection, collaborative problem solving, and deeper understanding of misbehavior. All teachers have been trained in Positive Discipline methodology and classroom practice and engage in ongoing professional development to hone their facility with this practice. Please find the Positive Discipline website attached here which includes information about the program as well as books and other resources for parents: <https://www.positivediscipline.com/>

Creating a Positive Classroom Community

In order to build a sense of classroom community, time is dedicated in every classroom during weekly community meetings and as opportunities organically emerge to facilitate the development of a caring and respectful school community. Some of the ways that teachers promote a positive classroom community are:

- Responding to and reinforcing positive behavior
- Developing a strong relationship with each child
- Helping children develop positive relationships with one another
- Validating children's accomplishments and progress
- Establishing classroom rules and guidelines that will enable daily routines to run smoothly and learning to occur.
- Reading and reviewing Beit Rabban's code of conduct

Responding to Challenging Behavior

In maintaining a positive classroom community, we aim to reinforce prosocial behavior rather than "punish" inappropriate behavior. However, there may be instances in which inappropriate behavior must be addressed directly. In particular, if the learning of other children is disrupted, or if children in the classroom are not emotionally or physically safe, then the school will intervene very quickly to resolve challenging behaviors. The circumstances of the incident and the needs of the child will determine the exact nature of the intervention.

Appropriate measures will be taken in response to physical or verbal aggression and other severe acting out behavior and may include clearly setting out expectations to the child, working collaboratively with parents to resolve issues, and providing additional support in the classroom setting, whether covered by the resources of the school or requiring additional resources from the family. Well-being of other students, disruption to learning, excessive demands on the teachers' time, and the level of parental support will be taken into account when determining how to handle any situation. A clear action plan will be put into place with the family with specific benchmarks to monitor progress. In the rare circumstance that this is insufficient to sustain the child in the school, the administration will work with the parents to find a more suitable school placement for their child.

Tips for Sharing Feedback with Teachers

It is important not to wait to reach out to a teacher if you have a question or concern. It is often best to reach out first with an email where you give the teacher general information about the topic, and then request a time to speak by phone so that you can avoid any misunderstandings. It is always best to start by assuming good intentions and asking questions.

Respectful Relationships between Parents and Adults

Conflict among peers is a normal part of child development and an important opportunity for growth. Understandably, interpersonal conflicts among children can also be triggers

for parents to get involved with the primary goal of protecting their child. The behavior we model at these times-- staff and parents alike-- is one of the most important ways children learn from these experiences. When such conflicts arise, teachers and administrators embrace the opportunity to help our students navigate them in healthy ways using the various social-emotional tools we proactively teach and model throughout the year. We ask parents to keep the following values in mind when such conflict arises:

- Adults in our community always speak respectfully and with kindness to each other, even when no children are present.
- Adults in our community never scold or rebuke another person's child.
- Adults in our community maintain a sense of perspective and always work to deescalate strife between children. When adults get involved proactively in conflicts between children, we do so in conversation with teachers and administrators and are open to other perspectives.
- Adults in our community remember that students are first and foremost children. We understand children's inherent ability to grow intellectually and emotionally. We do not brand any child as "good" or "bad." We never use terms that brand any child, even as a "bully" or otherwise.
- Adults in our community protect our children physically and emotionally. We all have a responsibility inform teachers and administrators if we are concerned about the welfare of our own children or other children based on things we have seen or things we have heard from our children or others.



STUDENT SUPPORT

When Your Child Needs Additional Learning Support in School

We believe every child should get the education they need, and we are committed to meeting the learning needs of each of our students to the best of our ability. We are also committed to working with parents to support specific learning differences, struggles and opportunities. Our Director of Student Support and our Learning and Enrichment Specialists, including Abra Mandel who supports English Language Arts, Hebrew, and Judaic Subjects and Ann Zisser who supports Math subjects, provide support and strategies for learning differences. Beit Rabban has guidelines for when children need additional learning support in the school. There are three stages for ensuring that the child's needs are being met:

Stage One: Class teacher, Director of Student Support, and other members of the educational administration observe the child closely and discuss recommendations for teaching approaches to address any issues. Parents may be approached if a collaborative approach to addressing issues is needed.

Stage Two: If the issues remain unresolved, then a consultation is set up with the parents and a plan is devised and followed with clear targets to measure progress.

Stage Three: Parents are advised to seek an external assessment or additional support from experts to help resolve the issues that cannot be reasonably addressed with the resources available in the school

In the event that the school is not able to appropriately meet a child's individualized needs, the administration together with the parents may decide to add outside support for the students or, less likely, that the school is no longer an appropriate setting for the child. During this discussion, we will consider primarily the child's needs and achievements but will also review the family's willingness to work collaboratively with the school and the degree to which the child's individual needs impacts the class as a whole.

When Your Child May be Eligible for Public-funded Academic Support Services

The school's Director of Student Support assists parents in applying to the New York City Department of Education (DOE) for academic support services, which may include occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, as well as professional and paraprofessional direct academic and behavioral support. If a child is determined eligible for support, the Director of Student Support will work with parents to set up services and will provide the family with a brief document to assist with applying for support from the DOE. It is the parent's responsibility to give all DOE documents and contact information for private service providers to the Director of Student Support, and to update information as necessary.



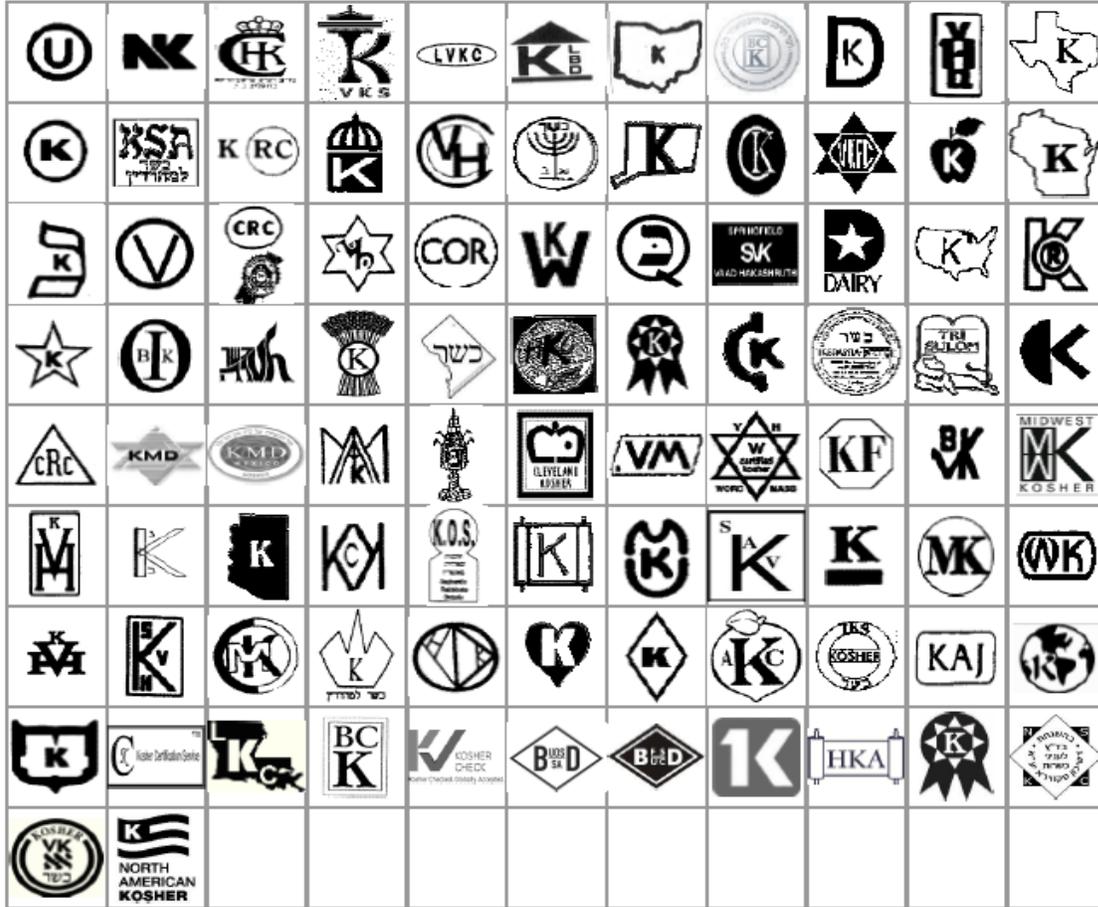
FOOD AND KASHRUT

Food and Kashrut Policy

Thoughtfulness about food is both inherent to our Jewish tradition and an element of our educational philosophy. To that end, Beit Rabban strives to offer the children wholesome, natural foods that will help them build strong minds and bodies and provide them with knowledge and practice regarding food choices. When the school offers food in the classroom as a part of our program, we emphasize the use of whole grains and nourishing foods, and when possible, look for local, seasonal and organic foods. We also try to avoid the use of processed or sugary foods and drinks, and artificial preservatives, colorings and other unnecessary additives.

Food choices and the definition of healthy food can be a very personal matter, and as a school, we are equally committed to creating an environment for children that is judgment-free about food. If the school is serving a snack, holiday or birthday food that is challenging to a family's food practices, the school will work with the family to identify an appropriate alternative that the family can provide to be distributed in a caring and appropriate manner. Beit Rabban encourages our parents to contribute ideas, sources, and learning opportunities about healthful and mindful eating. If you would like to discuss this further or identify useful resources regarding nutrition, please contact the Head of School.

In order to be an inclusive community and to accommodate the various approaches to *Kashrut*, we have identified the following *hekshers* (kosher certification) and consider these the "communal standard":



These symbols should be avoided:



*We thank Heschel for sharing this list developed with guidance from Rabbi Asher Lopatin Rabbi David Wolkenfeld.

All food served by the school conforms to this communal standard, and anytime a family sends in food to be shared it should conform to this standard. Please do not bring in homemade food for a class event.

Lunch and snack brought from home must be dairy or parve. **Please send nutritious foods and avoid dessert or snack foods.** We do not permit children to share the food that they bring to school because of differences in each child's eating requirements. Please make sure to discuss with your child what he or she enjoys eating at lunch and send in food that your child will like to eat.

Children may not bring candy to school or on the bus. At times, the school will provide treats with sugar, such as cake or popsicles on special occasions. Parents who do not want

their children to eat sugar should let the school know in writing at the start of the year, and we will ensure to have close alternatives for those students.

Lunch Program

Due to the pandemic, we will not be offering a lunch program this year.

Pizza Fridays

Due to the pandemic, we will not be offering a Friday pizza program this year.

Snack

Snack time remains an important break during the day and students bring their own snacks to school each day.

Nut-Aware Policy

- Parents may not send any peanuts, peanut butter or foods containing peanuts, peanut butter, peanut oil or any form of derivative of peanut to school.
- Parents should not send any tree-nuts (examples are almonds, walnuts, cashews, etc.) or foods containing these items to school.
- Parents should check the ingredients of all pre-packed food that is sent to school.
- Even if the ingredient label says, "may contain traces of nuts or peanuts", the label should be treated as if it says, "contains nuts or peanuts" and should not be sent to school.
- Peanut may be designated on a food label in a less easily recognized term such as "hydrolyzed vegetable protein".
- If children eat peanut butter for breakfast at home, parents should ensure that their hands and face are washed with soap and water before leaving for school.
- Beit Rabban staff and administration will follow these guidelines for all food served at school and made at school.
- Peanut butter is particularly deadly to anaphylactic children because it sticks to surfaces, to cutlery and to hands and faces. The reason parents are asked to bring in "peanut-free" snacks is to reduce the very real risk of cross-contamination.
- This policy is applicable on the school buses traveling to and from Beit Rabban as well. This policy is also applicable on all buses for school trips.



PARTIES

Birthdays

Birthdays are significant milestones in the lives of young children and are wonderful community building experiences as classmates participate in celebrating the special day of their friend.

School Birthday Celebrations in the Gan

Each birthday will be celebrated together as a class. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic parents may not attend their child's classroom birthday party this year. They may, however, send in a special book or game in honor of their child's birthday and a card to be read at school. The school will be happy to suggest wished-for books or games; please choose one and inscribe it with your child before sending it to the class. Families must be in touch with teachers to make arrangements and agree on a date for the birthday celebration a few weeks in advance. Please note that summer birthdays will be celebrated in the mornings during the last two weeks of school unless parents make other arrangements with the teachers.

School Birthday Celebrations in the K-3rd Grade

Birthdays in the Kevutzot provide a great opportunity to celebrate together as a classroom community. In Kevutzot, birthday celebrations include an opportunity for the birthday child to share something they like to do with the rest of the class. This may include a special book, game, art activity etc. for the class to engage for approximately 20 minutes. In exchange, the class will give birthday wishes to the child.

Birthday Parties Outside of School: Respecting our Intimate and Diverse Community

When planning out-of-school birthday parties or other events that host Beit Rabban children, we ask that everyone use as much sensitivity as possible in attending to the diversity within our community and the experience of each child.

Food at parties:

Please make sure that the food you serve at your child's birthday party is vegetarian and either (a) fully complies with the Beit Rabban kashrut policy detailed above, including no home-made food or (b) includes food that is kosher and that bears a *heksher* from our "communal standards" of kashrut in addition to whatever other homemade food you choose to serve. Please show clearly the difference between foods that are homemade and foods that purchased in accordance with the communal standard for kashrut.

Scheduling parties:

Birthday parties should not be scheduled on *Shabbat* or *Yom Tov*, in order to make sure that all children are able to attend. Please also keep in mind that if your event will be on Saturday evening or after a Yom Tov, it should start after Shabbat or the Yom Tov ends to allow all children to participate without any discomfort.

Guest lists:

Being an intimate community where everyone is known and valued is one of our greatest assets. We also understand that being a part of a small community puts additional responsibility on each member to help it work well for everyone. In many different situations, we discuss with children the role each plays and how there are times when individuals need to make sacrifices for the good of the entire community.

Please be extremely sensitive when making plans for parties. Invite either the entire class or two or fewer children from the class to your child's birthday celebration. We do not encourage gender-separate birthday parties as our classes are small and friendships tend to cross gender lines, but we do permit families to host gender-separate sleepovers.

When celebrating your child's birthday with two or fewer classmates, please encourage your child to avoid talking about these events in school so that others do not feel left out.



B'NAI MITZVAH

B'nai Mitzvah

Typically, students will have their b'nai mitzvah in either 6th or 7th grade, or sometimes 8th grade. We embrace the opportunity to celebrate each student as they officially enter Jewish adulthood. In addition to whatever a family plans for their child's bat/r mitzvah outside of school, we also mark the child's bar/t mitzvah in a way that is intended to (a) make the student feel loved and cared for by their Beit Rabban classmates and larger community; (b) focus the experience on a commitment to Torah, Avodah (service), Gemilut Chasadim (loving kindness); and (c) ensure that the in-school celebration is not onerous on students, parents or faculty.

In-School B'nai Mitzvah Celebrations

Each student will have an in-school celebration during a Thursday morning tefillah (or Monday morning or Rosh Chodesh, depending on what works for the family) to which the student's family, Middle Schools peers and teachers and administrators are invited. The student will choose one or two (but not more) of the following options to mark this simcha in school:

- Lead tefillah
- Read Torah (ideally the same Torah reading they are already preparing)
- Give a Dvar Torah

The minyan and tefillah in which we celebrate a student's in-school bar/t mitzvah will be determined according to family preferences (e.g. Orthodox, Partnership, Egalitarian, Ashkenazic, Sephardic), and the Director of Jewish Studies, Lisa Exler, is available to support families who do not have a family tradition in these areas. Each family will be responsible to constitute a minyan of people in accordance with their tradition, and the school will support the family's endeavors in this realm by sending an email to all parents and grandparents asking for volunteers to join the specific minyan style selected by the family.

Families are not expected to give gifts to individual students in honor of their b'nai mitzvah. Rather, parents in 6th and 7th grades will make a contribution of up to \$180 (please contribute this full amount if it is feasible for your family) at the beginning of the year. Of the collective amount raised, 33% will be used to by class parents to purchase a gift for each bar/t mitzvah child; 34% will be allocated to the class as a whole to donate to a tzedakah of their collective choice; and 33% will get divided among the b'nai mitzvah students that year, for each student to contribute to a tzedakah of their choice. Checks should be sent directly to our COO, Nicole Weiss, with "b'nai mitzvah gifts" in the subject

line. Parents may also pay via the school's online PayPal account, also specifying "b'nai mitzvah gifts" in the notes section.

Parents in fourth grade must share their (a) out of school bar/t mitzvah date and parsha, and (b) their preferred in school date (either a Thursday or a Rosh Chodesh) to our Director of Judaics and Ivrit, Lisa Exler (lisa@beitrabban.org) by April 1st. In the winter of fifth grade, Beit Rabban will schedule a meeting with parents to explain our approach to b'nai mitzvah celebrations. Finally, four to six weeks before the in-school celebration, the Director of Judaics and Ivrit will reach out to families to finalize the logistics for the celebration.

Out of School B'nai Mitzvah Celebrations

Please consider the wonderful opportunity our community has in creating a b'nai mitzvah culture from scratch! If your child is celebrating their bar or bat mitzvah out of school at services and/or a party, please make sure to follow all rules related to out of school birthday parties in general in addition to the following b'nai mitzvah specific rules and requests:

- Please communicate clearly the nature of the b'nai mitzvah services, irrespective of denominational affiliation etc. You can obtain sample language for this from our Director of Judaic Studies and Ivrit.
- If you invite children from the grade below or above your child's grade, please consider inviting the whole grade.
- Please arrange for home hospitality on Shabbat for students who do not travel on Shabbat and are not within walking distance of your child's bar/t mitzvah.



TECHNOLOGY

Technology Use in Classrooms

Gan and Kevutzot (Elementary School): Beit Rabban uses technology when it advances educational goals. We employ extremely limited use of technology, if any, in the Gan. Kevutzot and Chativah have Smart TVs to be used at teachers' discretion. Fourth grade also has a set of classroom Chromebooks that are used at teachers discretion, mostly when working on long-term research and writing projects.

The Chativah (Middle School): Starting in Middle School, students are introduced to the Google Classroom platform and are given a Beit Rabban email. Students are taught how to use this platform and all the rules around usage of their email addresses and Chromebooks. Students will also study internet safety and digital citizenship as a specific unit in their Healthy Living curriculum as well as academic honesty and research skills as part of their Executive Functioning curriculum. All Chromebooks are also set up with age-appropriate firewalls, and parents will receive their children's email addresses and passwords. More details with respect to Chromebook and email usage is shared in a Chromebook and digital citizenship contract signed by students and parents at the beginning of each school year.

Class sets of Chromebooks stay at school, and are primarily used for research and writing in Humanities as well as for research, experiments and coding in Science. Students are expected to have access to a computer at home for the purpose of research and writing homework.

Students are also expected to learn to type proficient on their own time.

Student Cell Phones at School

Only Chativah (Middle School) students are permitted to bring cellphones to school. Children in younger grades may not bring a cell phone to school unless parents obtain specific permission from our COO, Nicole Weiss. If your Middle School aged child will bring a cell phone to school, the following rules apply:

- Parents must inform our administrative associate, Tzivia Fishman (tfishman@beitrabban.org), within the first week of school that their child will be bringing a phone to school daily. If your child begins bringing a cell phone to school midyear, you can email Tzivia then.
- Parents and students must sign a cell phone contract with respect to use of their phone during school hours, most importantly agreeing that cell phones may not

be used or in a child's possession during school hours; that parents must contact our front office should they need to be in touch with their child during the school day; and that Beit Rabban reserves the right to prohibit a child from bringing a cell phone to school should there be regular violations of the cell phone policy.

- Students will drop off their cell phones each morning with their teacher to be returned at dismissal. If a child who brings a cell phone to school by that time has not dropped off their phone, the office administrator will check in with that child and then inform the parent if the child said they did not bring the phone on that day.



DRESS CODE

Dressing for School

Beit Rabban approaches dress code policies with the following guiding values:

- (a) Children should be dressed comfortably and safely in a manner that maximizes their ability to participate in all school activities, including sports, outdoor play and art.
- (b) Words and logos on clothing should be aligned with our school's values.
- (c) We try to avoid a materialistic environment where students feel pressure to conform in their dress or feel especially self-conscious about the way they look.
- (d) Staff intentionally avoid comments and policies that encourage body shaming.
- (e) Our immersive Jewish educational environment inspires certain dress requirements.
- (f) We embrace the tradition of "Bigdei Kodesh," a concept that when understood broadly implies that certain activities and special moments require special dress.

With these values in mind, our overall dress policy (quoted from education expert Rosetta E Lee) is as follows:

"What you wear is a combination of many factors. Among other things, your dress is an expression of who you are. It is your negotiation with what society tells you should look like and what that says about you. It is a realization of what your family can afford and chooses to spend money on.... We do not have a dress code that dictates nor polices what young people wear. We instead ask that you as a young person make choices that express who you really are rather than who you think you ought to be, that you are listening to your inner values rather than seeking external validation, and that you communicate your worth through actions rather than in labels and price tags. We look forward to engaging in conversations as you make these choices.

We do expect you to dress in a way that allows you to participate in all of your school activities fully and safely. We also expect you to abstain from wearing logos, writing, or images that are not in line with the school's core values such as respect, integrity, and ethics. A student whose choices are not in line with these expectations may be asked to change or return home to find a more suitable option."

Specific requirements include:

- Shoes must have a back- no flip flops or slides.

- Winter appropriate weather on cold days, including coats and gloves all winter. Please note that children go out for recess on all days with temperature above 20 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Snow clothing, including boots when snowing or in days after snow days. Please note that students go out for recess when it is snowing and when there is snow on the ground as long as the temperature is 20 degrees or above.
- Closed-toe shoes (and any other specific requirements) during hiking trips.
- "Bigdei Chag," festive clothing (as determined by a child and their family) should be worn in honor of special occasions including:
 - Torah Reading Ceremony- all school
 - Siddur Celebration- first grade
 - Yom Haatzmaut- all school in blue and white
 - Celebrations of Learning- class hosting the program
- Kippot for all boys in K-8th grade.
- When in accordance with family observance, tallit and/or tefillin for b'nai mitzvah aged students.

A note on kippot...

All boys in Kindergarten and older should arrive to school with kippot and wear them throughout the day. We also ask that each male student in grades K-8 bring an additional, back-up kippah at the beginning of the school year. Back-up kippot will be stored in the classroom to be available for use if they forget or misplace their kippah on any given day. If a male student does not have access to a kippah, their teacher will provide them with a Beit Rabban kippah, and parents will be responsible to reimburse the school for that kippah (\$10).

We are explicitly and proudly non-denominational at Beit Rabban. We celebrate and discuss our Jewish diversity. In addition to ideological and denominational differences, families also observe the practices they believe with differing degrees of consistency. At the same time, we do make certain school-wide decisions with respect to Jewish practice during the school day, including this requirement with respect to kippot. Decisions like these are made for the following reasons: to ensure a basic standard of practice that allows all in our community to participate; for educational purposes; and/or in order to create an immersive Jewish experience. Wearing kippot is one such practice that contributes to the experience of immersion. As a school with an integrated education that does not define certain periods as Jewish and others as secular, we do not take the approach common in some schools to required kippot only during tefillah and Jewish learning periods.

We are a school that intentionally avoids encouraging or modeling gender-based stereotypes and proactively educates toward the belief that all Jews, of all genders, have equal access to and responsibility for their texts and tradition. We are also a proudly diverse community, and we would not impose a requirement that is inconsistent with the

Jewish beliefs/practice of any subset of our community, whether Orthodox or otherwise. We believe requiring female students to wear kippot would do that.

Women have been wearing kippot to synagogue in liberal denominations for generations now, and some wear traditional kippot or other head coverings as kippot at all times. This is a normative Jewish practice for a subset of our families and students. We always try to do better as a school to support girls who want to wear kippot and families who want their daughters to wear kippot at school. We endeavor to teach our students to navigate peer pressure with confidence and to think independently while being respectful of and open to the ideas and practices of others. This is core to our identity and to our teachers' instructional practice. We will simultaneously work to support girls who want to wear kippot while doing the same for girls who do not wear kippot.

We do not permit students to wear hats instead of kippot during class, but they are welcome to do so on field trips. We have found that hats block eye contact in a way that makes it difficult for a teacher to intuit a student's feelings and in a way that allows students to emotionally retreat when it is not the healthiest response. We recognize that some boys feel more physically comfortable in hats than in kippot, and they are welcome to wear hats on top of or instead of their kippot during park time.



VALUABLES

Money and Valuables at School

Students in Elementary grades, K-4, should not bring money to school at all, including on field trip days, except to give classroom tzedakah. We recommend that parents of Middle School students speak to their children about only carrying the amount of money they need on a particular day and in no event an amount of money that would be upsetting to lose. No student should bring anything they consider especially valuable (whether because of cost, uniqueness or special meaning) unless it is needed in connection with a particular project.

Valuables, especially things that children collect and/or trade, tend to be the subject of communal discord that is disruptive to school. No students, including Middle School students, may bring electronics to school (including iPads, handheld gaming devices etc.) without the explicit permission of a parent and their teacher. Students who bring electronics to school with said permission are required to drop off the equipment with the office administrator at arrival and may pick it back up at dismissal. Students in K-4th grade also may not bring cellphones to school. Any technology brought to school in violation of this policy will be held by Beit Rabban staff until a parent or caregiver can pick it up.

Please note that any valuable brought to school without the permission of a student's teacher is outside the purview of Beit Rabban's responsibility.

Students may not sell anything to anyone else at school or during the school day. Students also may not raise money individually for particular causes on school grounds or during the school day. However, there may be times when a class raises money together for a particular reason with the approval and involvement of their teacher.



BRPA

Beit Rabban Parents' Association (BRPA)

The mission of the Beit Rabban Parents' Association is to promote and foster a sense of community among Beit Rabban parents, children and staff through special events, field trips and other celebrations. In addition, the Parents' Association is devoted to supporting the life of the school and appreciating the classroom teachers. The BRPA is led by a coordinating committee and class parents assigned to coordinate the efforts and the volunteers for any given event. To get involved please email BRPA@beitrabban.org.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Policy and Procedures

With the help of our medical committee, Beit Rabban has updated our policies, procedures and routines to ensure that we meet the needs of each student. The Administrative Associate in our Business Office serves as Health Clerk. The Health Clerk is responsible for keeping accurate health records, completing reports and logs, responding to ill students, and communicating relevant student health information to teachers and parents. Please visit www.beitrabban.org/parents/school-documents/ for the up to date forms and DOE requirements.

Parents must ensure that we have received their child's up-to-date medical records and emergency contact information form. Students will not be able to start school without them. This should include any information about allergies, illness and dietary needs. Each fall, the New York City Department of Health reviews and monitors all students' immunization records.

Vaccinations

Should you have questions regarding immunizations needed for entrance to school, please review [required vaccinations for New York City](#). Beit Rabban Day School does not accept religious exemptions for immunizations.

Daily Log

The Health Clerk records all medical complaints raised by students in school such as stomachaches, nausea, aches and pains and generally not feeling well. Whenever a student comes to the health clerk with a medical complaint, the date and time, the student's name, class, nature of the complaint, and steps taken are recorded in the daily log. If a student is frequently coming with complaints, the Health Clerk will contact a student's parent.

Medication

When a student is ill, the Health Clerk dispenses all medications only with the written permission of the child's parents. A completed and signed Medication Permission Form is needed to provide all medications to your student. Please note the completed and signed Medication Permission Form is for both prescription and non-prescription medications. If a student needs to take prescription medicine on a regular basis, the student's parents must visit the Health Clerk's office to provide the necessary medication directly. Any medicine that is dispensed is recorded in the medication disbursement log.

Injuries

Whenever a child is seriously injured, whether it is at the park or in school, the supervising teacher is required to report the accident by notifying the Health Clerk and by completing an online incident report. In addition, the Health Clerk is required to call the child's parents to inform them of what transpired. In the case of a head injury, an email will also be sent to parents of involved children.

Communicable Diseases and General Health

If a child is ill during the school day and unable to participate in school activities, or has a fever of 100.4 or more, the Health Clerk or teacher will call parents to take the child home. We also ask that parents carefully screen children at home. If you suspect your child may be sick, please keep him or her at home to ensure that illness is not spread throughout the class.

Parents are asked to keep their child at home if they have:

- A fever or has had a fever during the previous twenty-four-hour period. Please note that a child with a temperature of 100.4 or above may not return to school for a period of 24 hours after the fever has abated. If a child is sent home because of an illness, they must remain at home for 24 hours (the next full school day).
- A heavy and/or discolored nasal discharge or sore throat.
- Fussy or cranky behavior or is generally not behaving like his/her normal self.
- Had multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting, the child should remain at home for at least 24 hours and seek medical advice.
- A rash of unexplained origin, the child must remain home and should seek medical advice.
- Fifth Disease.
- Strep and it has not yet been 24 hours since both the end of fever and start of antibiotics.
- Lice.
- Conjunctivitis (aka pink eye).

Parents should inform the school if their child has a communicable disease. When deemed appropriate by the Administrative Director and the Health Clerk, emails will be sent home to the appropriate parents about the illness with a description of the illness and some treatment information.

Head Lice

Students with head lice are to be excluded from school. When lice are identified, parents will be notified immediately and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. If lice are identified outside of school, parents are required to notify the school by emailing the health clerk. Students will be excluded from school until they bring in a clearance note from a reputable lice treatment company (i.e. LicEnders) or medical provider indicating that the student is lice-free. The clearance note must be presented to the Health Clerk before the student returns to class.

Students with nits (lice eggs) will not be excluded from school. Nits are not equivalent to head lice; nits cannot be transmitted from person to person, and therefore will not result in school exclusion. If nits are identified during the periodic school-wide checks or a class-wide inspection after a family has alerted the school to the presence of lice in a student in the class, a note will be sent home to the families of the children with nits with information about lice and the recommended procedures to follow. An email notification will go out to class parents informing of a case of lice or nits in the class.

The school takes steps to limit transmission of lice, including asking students not to share brushes, hair accessories, kippot, hats or other head coverings; routine treatment of classroom carpets after the identification of lice; the installation of barriers or distance between hooks used for the hanging of coats and scarves; and diligence in the implementation of this policy.

Allergy Protocol

At the start of the school year, a letter is sent to parents of all students who have allergies as listed on their health/emergency contact forms. This letter includes an Allergy Protocol to be completed and signed by the child's doctor. For students with serious and life-threatening allergies, their forms will be marked as such and printed on bright paper. The form should be returned to the Health Clerk with a **photo** of the child. These forms are kept in the Health Clerk's office in the red medical records binder.

In every classroom and the main office, there is an allergy binder that contains a list of all students who have allergies and their specific allergies. A copy of the allergy protocol for each student is also included in the red binder. Epi-pens are kept in the Health Clerk's office and in the park bag in each classroom. The classroom's "park bag" will contain an Epi-pen and an allergy list and allergy protocols for each student. This park bag is taken to the park daily and on all school trips. Children with life-threatening allergies will be asked to bring two Epi-pens to school at the beginning of the school year to be stored at school in the above-mentioned places. All Beit Rabban faculty and administration will be trained on an annual basis in responding to allergic reactions and using Epi-pens.

Staff Training

Every staff member is trained in CPR/First Aid/AED and learns how to administer an Epi-pen. Additional training will be provided for teachers of students who have medical conditions.

School Hygiene

Bathrooms are cleaned twice daily. Hand sanitizer is provided in every room. There will be programs for students about hygiene and cleanliness throughout the school year, including posting signage in bathrooms outlining the appropriate steps for washing hands. Washing hands and covering coughs have been identified by the Department of Health as the key steps to fighting the spread of contagious diseases such as strep.

Crisis Preparedness Policy

In order to ensure the safety of all school occupants, Beit Rabban has developed a crisis preparedness plan. In creating the plan, Beit Rabban consulted with the U.S. Department of Education, the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York and the Anti-Defamation League. We have received input on this plan from staff, parents, board members, the synagogue staff, and the NYPD. The plan covers four areas: mitigation & prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. What follows is important information for parents to know.

1. **Fire Safety:** Beit Rabban's Fire Safety Plan calls for a regular schedule of fire drills. The first fire drill of the year will be announced well in advance so that teachers and students will be prepared, and subsequent drills will not be announced in advance. The fire drill assembly location is on the corner of 86th Street and Central Park West.
2. **Attendance Tracking:** In order to account for all students each day, daily attendance will be taken. Attendance sheets will be completed and returned to the school office every day by 8:25am for Kevutzot (elementary and middle school grades) and by 8:45am for the Gan. If children arrive at school after these times, they must stop at the office to obtain a late pass, which lets us know, who is here and who is not. In an emergency, it is imperative that we not spend precious time searching for students who are not at school that day.
3. **Parent Alert:** The school has in place the RenWeb Alert system to alert families of urgent issues such as an emergency or a snow day.
4. **Alternate Locations:** If evacuation is necessary, three alternate locations have been identified in addition to the fire drill assembly location. Please contact Beit Rabban as soon as possible if you need directions or a map of the alternate locations.
 - a. Primary Location (weather permitting): Central Park – at 86th Street.
 - b. Secondary Location: The Jewish Center, 131 West 86th Street.
 - c. Tertiary Location: Rodeph Sholom School, 10 West 84th Street
5. **Emergency and Student Release Procedures:** In the event of an emergency, the COO will determine if it is necessary to release students early or directly to parents/caregivers (instead of going on the bus as usual, if relevant). If this happens, the school will contact parents directly. In addition, the school will send out an alert through Parents Alert to all parents with pertinent information. If phones are not working, parents should:
 - a. Listen to local media for instructions. As many radio stations as possible will be contacted; the primary ones will be: WNYC - FM 93.9 and AM 1010 WINS. Beit Rabban will also leave information with the local police station (24th Precinct at 151 West 100th Street, New York, NY, 10025 (212) 678-1811).
 - b. Report to the alternate location to retrieve children. If it is necessary to go to an alternate location, a sign will be posted on the door of the school, a message will be left on the school's answering machine, an alert will be sent

to all parents, and every effort will be made to inform the local media stations cited above and the local police precinct. School officials will have the roster of children and parents/caregivers will have to check-in before leaving the alternate location with their child(ren) so that everyone is accounted for.

- c. If a parent/caregiver is unable to get to school or the alternate location within a reasonable timeframe, children will either be given shelter at the school (the school has purchased emergency provisions to be prepared for this situation), will be sent home with their "buddy" family as designated on the emergency contact forms filled out by the parents over the summer, or will accompany a teacher or staff member home. Clear instructions will be left with SAJ building staff and/or with the local police precinct if the building is closed.

Beit Rabban will do everything possible to communicate with you regularly if there is an emergency. Know that the safety of your children is of utmost concern. If you have any comments, questions or concerns about the crisis preparedness plan, please be in touch with our COO

Field Trips

Field trips are an essential part of the experiential learning program at Beit Rabban Day School. Teachers are encouraged to use New York City as a laboratory for learning, and we are fortunate to have such incredible museums and other resources so close by. In order to ensure that all students travel and return safely on field trips, we frequently invite parents to chaperone. Parents are responsible for helping ensure the safety of the children and are often asked to lead a group and facilitate learning. We ask that parent volunteers do not bring younger siblings to attend field trips.

Absences

We hope all children will be able to attend school every day. For purposes of safety and security, it is also essential that we are aware of who is and is not at school at all times. In the event that a child will be absent, please let us know why and when we can expect the child to return to school.

It is essential that you call us or leave a message before 8:00AM to let us know the reason for the absence and when you anticipate your child returning to school. If your child is ill longer than expected, please continue to keep us informed.

Bikkur Cholim, the idea of caring for the sick, is an essential value at Beit Rabban. In the Gan, as part of the classroom jobs, a student is in charge of *Bikkur Cholim*. The teachers and students in your child's class will call your child to check on him or her at home during the school day. In the Kevutzot, the teachers will ask a student in the class to call your child, ask how your child is feeling, and will give an update about what happened in school that day. (When children are sick, we do not expect them to do school work until

they are well enough to return to school.) We appreciate your help when it is your child's turn to call a sick classmate. Please also make certain that you are fully aware of the school's policies regarding returning to school after an illness, covered in this handbook's section on Health and Safety.

Strollers

Parents in the Gan who are commuting their child to school via stroller, may leave their stroller in the South Campus coat room. We ask that the parent/caregiver quickly enter and exit the building to drop off and pick up the stroller as non-staff adults are not permitted in the building this year.

Security

We take security very seriously at Beit Rabban. Personalized letters are sent out to parents and guardians regarding our security procedures. Should you have any questions regarding security, please contact our COO. Your full cooperation with our procedures is greatly appreciated.

In addition, we ask that families are careful regarding the items that children bring with them to school.

The following items are not allowed in school:

1. Any sharp objects
2. Any toy or real weapons
3. Electronic devices, except related to medical needs
4. Clothing and accessories that interfere with the health, safety and academics of our children should not be worn to school
5. Any food containing nuts

Snow Days and Emergency Closures

On snow and emergency days, Beit Rabban decides whether to call for a snow day informed by the decision of the NYC Department of Education and the safety needs of both children and staff. We also consider the decision of the NYC Department of Education, as school bus service does not run on days that the public school system closes. You can hear news of public school closings on your radio station. If school closures are necessary during the school day, you or your emergency contacts will be contacted via Parent Alert to arrange for your children to be picked up as soon as possible

QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS? REACH OUT...



APPENDIX A

ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2020-21/5781

STAGGERED START SCHEDULE

Tuesday, September 8

Beit Rabban Darom (South Campus)

- Gan Kachol 8:20/9:40AM
- Gan Sagol 8:30/9:50AM
- Garinim (K) 8:10/10:30AM
- Shorashim (1) 8:20/10:40AM

Beit Rabban Tzafon (North Campus)

Arrival

- Arrival Group #1 8:10AM
- Arrival Group # 2 8:20AM
- Arrival Group #3 8:30AM

Dismissal

- Dismissal Group #1 10:30AM
- Dismissal Group # 2 10:40AM
- Dismissal Group #3 10:50AM

Wednesday, September 9

Beit Rabban Darom (South Campus)

- Gan Kachol 8:20/10:40AM
- Gan Sagol 8:30/10:50AM
- Garinim (K) 8:10/12:00PM
- Shorashim (1) 8:20/12:10PM

Beit Rabban Tzafon (North Campus)

Arrival

- Arrival Group #1 8:10AM
- Arrival Group # 2 8:20AM
- Arrival Group #3 8:30AM

Dismissal

- Dismissal Group #1 12:00PM
- Dismissal Group # 2 12:10PM
- Dismissal Group #3 12:20PM

Thursday, September 10

Beit Rabban Darom (South Campus)

- Gan Kachol 8:20/1:10PM
- Gan Sagol 8:30/1:20PM
- Garinim (K) 8:10/2:00PM
- Shorashim (1) 8:20/2:10PM

Beit Rabban Tzafon (North Campus)

Arrival

- Arrival Group #1 8:10AM
- Arrival Group # 2 8:20AM
- Arrival Group #3 8:30AM

Dismissal

- Dismissal Group #1 2:00PM
- Dismissal Group # 2 2:10PM
- Dismissal Group #3 2:20PM

Friday, September 11

Beit Rabban Darom (South Campus)

- Gan Kachol 8:20/1:50PM
- Gan Sagol 8:30/2:00PM
- Garinim (K) 8:10/1:40PM
- Shorashim (1) 8:20/1:50PM

Beit Rabban Tzafon (North Campus)

Arrival

- Arrival Group #1 8:10AM
- Arrival Group # 2 8:20AM
- Arrival Group #3 8:30AM

Dismissal

- Dismissal Group #1 1:40PM
- Dismissal Group # 2 1:50PM

- Dismissal Group #3 2:00PM