

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

*2016-2017*

Micah Children’s Academy

2001 Old Hickory Boulevard

Brentwood, Tennessee 37027

Phone: 615-942-5162

Website: [www.micahchildrensacademy.org](http://www.micahchildrensacademy.org)

Email: [tlepore@micahchildrensacademy.org](mailto:tlepore@micahchildrensacademy.org)

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Theresa LePore, Director

Micah Children’s Academy

2001 Old Hickory Blvd.

Brentwood, TN 37027

Dear Academy Families,

We are so happy to welcome you to the 2016-2017 school year. *And, what a year it will be!* Since this is year seven of our school’s existence, you hold a special place in the continued development of and history of the Micah Children’s Academy. Together we can continue to build a strong program that begins and ends with what is best for children…our main concern.

Please read this Handbook carefully. It will help answer questions as you go along and will help you understand our policies and procedures. We are in this together…*It Takes a Village*!

We are always available to answer any questions you might have.

Here’s to a fantastic school year full of discovery, creation and wonderment!

~Theresa

ALL ABOUT MICAH CHILDREN’S ACADEMY

MCA Philosophy

The Micah Children’s Academy (MCA) provides a warm, safe environment where students from 6 weeks through pre-K can actively discover and expand their imaginations and minds. A pastoral campus and unique outdoor playscape further the opportunities for exploration and learning. Jewish traditions and celebrations provide an anchor for programming and parents are supported in their parenting journey. The Micah Children’s Academy is a *“home away from home”* where all students can play, learn, and grow!

The Micah Children’s Academy is committed to providing the highest quality early childhood education program. Great emphasis is placed on the interaction between our rabbis, faculty, children, and their parents.

Congregation Micah

Congregation Micah is a vibrant reform synagogue, offering creative and diverse ways to celebrate Jewish life using the rich beliefs and practices of modern Reform Judaism as its foundation. We have adopted the words of Micah (6:8), the Biblical prophet and civil rights advocate as our congregation’s message of equality and welcome for all: *“Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with thy God.”*

**Location**

Micah Children’s Academy is located at Congregation Micah, 2001 Old Hickory Boulevard at the corner of Hillsboro Road and Old Hickory in Brentwood, Tennessee 37027. The MCA uses the classrooms in the Education Wing and the playscape on the western side of the building.

**Enrollment**

Priority is given to Congregation Micah members, siblings, and then members of the larger community. MCA has a non-discrimination policy; although there is Jewish content, non-Jewish children are welcome to enroll.

**Hours of Operation**

THE SCHOOL DAY OPTION:

The regular school day hours are 7:00AM to 3:00PM

THE FULL DAY OPTION:

We offer our families the option for a full day of school. If you choose this option, your child can be dropped off as early as 7:00 am and stay as late as 6:00 pm. Children must be picked up and signed-out by 6:00 pm. Additional charges apply if picked up after 6:00 pm.

Vacation Days

MCA will be closed for all major National holidays and for those Jewish holidays which are consistent with Reform Judaism.

**School Calendar 2016-2017**

**The following list is a schedule of important dates, scheduled early closings, and holidays that the school will be closed.**

August 1st First Day of School   
August 11th Open House (School is open)  
September 5th Labor Day – School is closed  
October 3rd Rosh Hashanah – School is closed  
October 11th Early closing @ 3:00 – Kol Nidre  
October 12th Yom Kippur – School is closed  
November 23rd -25th Thanksgiving Break – School is closed  
December 23rd –January 1st Winter break – School is closed  
January 2nd School resumes  
January 16th Martin Luther King Jr. Day – School is closed  
March 20th – 24th \*Spring Break – School is closed  
May 26th Pre-K Graduation at 11:00 (School is open)  
May 29th Memorial Day – School is closed  
July 4th Independence Day – School is closed  
July 24th -31st Teacher In-Service Week – School is closed

\*Spring break camp will be offered…

**Class Size/Staff to Student Ratios**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **AGE GROUP** | **ENROLLMENT** | **\*STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO** |
| Infants (6 weeks to 12months) | 4 per classroom | 4:1 |
| Infants 2 (6 weeks to 12months) | 8 per classroom | 4:1 |
| Toddlers (12 months to 24 months) | 12 per classroom | 6:1 |
| Tiny Tots 1 (24 months to 30 months) | 10 per classroom | 6:1 |
| Minis 1 (30 months to 42 months) | 10 per classroom  10 per classroom | 6:1  8:1 (once 36 months) |
| Minis 2 (43 months to 48/50 months) | 13 per classroom | 13:1 |
| Pre-K (48 months to eligible for Kindergarten) | 15 per classroom | 15:1 |

*\*While these ratios are recommended and define our core standard, we will include additional teaching staff in each age group via our Floating Teachers. We also fill our rooms based on the classroom space. The ratios are suggested by DHS.*

**Financials**

***Deposits and Fees***

Parents are responsible for the following deposits and fees:

* *Registration Fee*: A non-refundable registration fee of $100.00 will be due and payable upon initial application to Micah Children’s Academy. Returning parents will pay $150.00 pre-registration fee in February in order to secure their spot for the following school year. The fee will be applied toward their August tuition.
* *Enrichment Fee:* A fee of $225 per student (maximum of $410 per family) will be assessed at the beginning of each school year for existing and new families.  
     
  (*Registration and enrichment fees are non-refundable)*

***Tuition***

MCA tuition is paid in equal installments across the length of the 12 month contract and is due on the first each month**. It is late after the 5th of the month** and will result in a late payment assessment. Unless you change your child’s schedule or add a drop in day or late care for a day, your tuition charges will be the same each month. An invoice is provided at the end of the previous month for you to review and confirm that the amount is accurate.

***Paying tuition:***

* ***We collect all tuition payments via automatic withdrawal.*** It is your responsibility to provide us with a cancelled or voided check for the account from which your tuition is to be deducted.
* Your tuition is considered late after the 6th of the month. A $30.00 late fee will be assessed to your tuition for all late payments.

***Late Pick-Up fee***\* If you are late picking your child up after 3:00 p.m., you will be assessed a drop in late care charge of $25.00.   
   
\* If you pick your child up after 6:00 p.m., you will be assessed $25.00 between 6:00-6:15, and an additional $25.00 between 6:15-6:30 and so on. Food for thought, leave early so you won’t get charged this hefty late fee! Our teachers and staff have families as well that they need to support. Thank you for your consideration!

**Change of Schedule/Withdrawal**

All schedule changes require a ***Change of Schedule Form*.** Changes must be received by

the 20th of the month prior to the month being changed. One schedule change will be allowed free of

charge per school year, and a $25 charge will be assessed for any subsequent changes**.** A *Change of*

*Schedule Form* can be found on our Website. Withdrawal: The obligation for full payment of tuition and other

fees will continue unless the parents submit a signed notification letter of withdrawal. **The Undersigned agrees to**

**furnish the School with at least thirty (30) days advance written notice of such withdrawal.** If the Undersigned

fails to provide such written notice, the Undersigned remains responsible for the full tuition for the calendar month

following the child’s last day of attendance. This is includes the months between July to August, if you have

registered for the following school year that begins in August.

**Inclement Weather and Snow Days**All attempts will be made to stay open throughout the winter months. However, there may be conditions that force us to close for everyone’s safety.

Our closing is determined by two factors:

* If the roads surrounding MCA are determined to be hazardous, or if it is determined that they will not remain safe to drive during the day, we will close and will inform you via email, phone messages, Twitter, our Website, and the local media. (Channels 2, 4, and 5).
* If we begin to experience inclement weather during the day, we will endeavor to remain open. Should we determine that it is necessary to close; we will notify you and try to give you two hours in which to arrive. It is important for you to arrange to pick up your child as soon as possible, as chances are that weather conditions will continue to deteriorate.

***Outside Play***  
  
We will attempt to go outside every day, so please dress your child appropriately. State regulations mandate that students are expected to play outside unless the temperature falls below 32 degrees (F) or registers at 95 (F) degrees or higher. Please dress your child appropriately and send the appropriate clothing so that they can go outside (gloves, hats, etc.). A hat is strongly recommended for all year round.

ALL ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

**Education Philosophy**

The Micah Children’s Academy (MCA) believes that all children are natural learners and that they learn best through play. For that reason, we structure our units around a variety of play activities in each content area. We integrate art, outdoor experiences, and music into our lessons as well as links to Judaic themes and traditions. Reading and acquiring a love of reading is essential to our program. Finally, we believe students learn best in an environment that is positive, supportive, and respectful. Great emphasis is placed on the interaction between our rabbis, faculty, children, and their parents.

Our Staff

We are highly selective in identifying and hiring our staff. We provide them with a comprehensive pre-service professional development experience, on-going training and development, and time to discuss student needs and plan with their colleagues. In addition, we ensure that they will have the resources and materials needed to meet your child’s needs. Staff changes are a fact of life and we will do everything possible to inform you of the changes in advance. First, if feasible, we will have the teacher email all the parents as to why she/he is leaving. This makes the parents feel safe in knowing the teacher is leaving on good terms. If the teacher or staff person’s employment is terminated, then the director will email parent’s regarding the situation. If necessary, the director will call a parent meeting. The director will assure that all measures will take place to replace the staff person appropriately. After, new staff person is hired; the director will email parents his/her qualifications and introduction. The parents and students will also have a chance to have a meet and greet.

At the beginning of every year school year, families of Micah Children’s Academy are given the option of a teacher home visit. This gives the students a chance to meet their new teacher on their “turf” and on their terms. We believe this will allow for a smoother transition from home to school.

Curriculum Areas

The Academy’s interdisciplinary curriculum is crafted to engage academic, spiritual, and social minds. Each month, we craft our lessons around one Jewish Value and teachers design lessons around that value in an age-appropriate manner. Academically, each day includes specific attention to language development (English, Spanish, and Hebrew), science, mathematics, and a joyous observance of Jewish ritual and tradition. Multi-sensory activities and materials both enhance and sharpen senses, thus accommodating auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners alike. Exploration of the natural world on Congregation Micah’s pastoral campus includes trips to the Little Harpeth River as well as our playscape, our memorial, and teaching gardens.

Cognitive skills are developed in conjunction with enrichment activities in music, art, and drama. Jewish tradition helps orient young minds of any faith, tradition, or culture to the universal ethic of tolerance and appreciation for all members of the global human family. Participation in cooperative group learning develops increased recognition of and admiration for one’s peers.

*In an age-appropriate manner, all Academy students will:*

* Engage in Judaic activities in the areas of art, cooking, dramatic play, Jewish holiday games and observances, stories, and music and singing with our rabbis and music staff.
* Build physical and creative skills daily in our eco-friendly outdoor playscape
* Explore, experiment, problem-solve, and use their natural curiosity to learn
* Appreciate the diversity of language and customs through exploration of English, Hebrew, and Spanish.
* Explore their creative talents through art, music, drama, and play

*Program by Age Group*

***Infants and Toddlers***

Infants and toddlers view and learn about their world through their senses and physical actions. . We will place our emphasis on providing a safe, peaceful environment that is also stimulating for developing minds. The children are spoken, sung and read to frequently, are held and nurtured, have many different objects in their environment to see and touch, and have many opportunities to develop relationships with adults and other children.

***Tiny Tots 1 and 2***

Children in this age grouping are beginning to develop socially and emotionally, grow their vocabulary and test their independence. To this end, students will work in both small and large groups thus learning to work together, respect one another, and find their unique and special talents. They will begin to build their core language, reading, and math skills during play and will experience their “expanded” world through science and physical activity.

***Minis 1 and 2***

  Each Mini is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth and development. To enhance the learning in this age group, our program offers activities and experiences in the areas of science, math, beginning reading and writing, physical skills, dramatic play, block play, and creative and movement. Their very different learning styles are considered when developing appropriate activities for our Minis.

***Pre-K***

***Pre-Kindergarten***

Building on the Minis learning experiences, our Pre-K program offers a balance of play and structured individual and group activities. We strive to build responsible learners with good habits and the skills needed to become lifelong learners. More importantly, we aspire to develop positive feelings towards learning. Reading and writing experiences are expanded and provide the foundational skills for kindergarten. Experiences are provided that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas - physical, social, emotional and intellectual. Children are allowed to select many of their own activities from among a variety of learning center areas prepared by the teachers.

Classroom Management

As stated in our philosophy, we strive to provide a respectful environment for children where the emphasis is on learning to self-manage. In order to reach this goal, we employ the best of many theories while integrating may of the “Conscious Discipline” processes.

Each child’s development has its own unique characteristics, challenges and needs. At MCA, “discipline is defined all the actions taken by teachers to develop acceptable behaviors in children.” Our teachers model appropriate behavior and offer positive guidance at all times. Our aim is to help children feel good about themselves as they learn to behave in responsible ways.

***We believe and support…..***

* A *yes* environment which encourages strong self-esteem and positive behavior.
* Providing children with methods and processes that build self-control and self-management
* Helping each child understand what is expected of him/her.
* Empowering students to make appropriate choices.
* “Positive redirection” techniques and set consistent limits that ensure the safety and well-being of each person at school.
* Respect for the staff and other students, the school environment, and its materials.
* Natural and logical consequences are used to motivate and empower children.
* The use of clear communication and problem-solving skills and strategies to resolve conflicts

***We do not believe nor support…***

* Corporal punishment of any kind.
* Handling children in a harsh or physical manner
* Shaming, threatening or being verbally abusive.
* Withholding food or activities.
* Punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the potty.
* Punitive isolation.

Specific Behavior Policies

Certain behaviors demand specific attention. These include biting and aggressive acts towards other students or staff. While these are developmentally normal, these acts can be scary and frustrating for  
everyone involved. We have included specific information and interventions for these acts below:  
  
**Biting**

For safety and health concerns, ***we take biting seriously****.* In situations where a child is routinely biting, our faculty works with families to develop a school action plan to reduce biting incidents and help the child work through this stage of development. When biting happens, our response is to care for and help the child who was bitten and then to help the biter learn other behaviors. Our focus is not on punishment of the biting, but on effective techniques to address the reasons for biting. We believe that delayed punishment at home will not be understood by the child.

**Reports** will be written for the child who was bitten, and will be given to parents of the bitten child. Teachers will work with families of the biter and the bitten child to keep them informed. We will make every effort to modify the behavior quickly. In order to ensure that confidentiality is maintained, ***we do not share the names of children who bite.***

***Aggressive Behavior***

In social settings where young children are just beginning to experiment with ways to interact effectively with their peers, it is common for incidences of aggression to occur. At certain stages of early childhood development, children’s desire to communicate their feelings and the need to assert themselves may sometimes be expressed in non-constructive nonverbal ways. They may hit another child, grab toys or bite. Our staff understands the developmental context in which these behaviors occur, and we provide an environment where children can learn more constructive ways of interacting with peers.

When aggressive incidents do occur, we inform parents/guardians about it. Shared information typically includes the details of the event itself, including the time and place, preceding and subsequent events, the steps taken to comfort the child who was hurt, and steps taken to handle the situation. We share our plans for teaching more constructive ways of interacting and for preventing future recurrences. The Academy staff does not reveal identity of the child who engaged in aggressive behavior. We place high value on maintaining the confidentiality of each child’s records while protecting the safety of each child in our school.

**Communication with Our Families**

As was previously stated, we are committed to working in partnership with our families throughout the year. In order to maximize this, we will offer the following communication tools and services to all families:

* A quarterly Newsletter from the Director of the Academy
* Informational emails sent throughout the month from the Director of the Academy
* A Chalk Board, updated regularly, in our entry hall
* Daily reports for younger children and weekly teacher-generated online newsletters from all classrooms
* At least one parent meeting and one parent training workshop offered during each semester
* On-going handouts for families that highlight ideas, suggestions, and updates
* Samples of student work and/or projects available on a monthly basis
* A listing of current community resources available to all parents

Updated information and communications with the staff via our Website, Twitter, and Facebook   
 ***Website***

[***www.micahchildrensacademy.org***](http://www.micahchildrensacademy.org)

Our website is designed to not only convey information to the public who may want to learn more about our Academy, but to serve as an information resource to our families. Families have access to materials and information that will be useful throughout the year.

🖳 Website Resources

All forms (Change of Schedule, Medication, Field Trip Permission, Movie Permission, etc.)

1. Your Parent Handbook
2. Calendars (events, snacks for the month)
3. News from your Parent Advisory Committee
4. Blogs about our Enrichment activities and so much more

***Twitter*** We have a Twitter Account and you can follow us at **MCA@MicahChildrens** . This will enable you to get the most updated information from us.

***Facebook***We also have a Facebook Page: **MCA-Brentwood**. Please “LIKE” us and follow our events through pictures, announcements, and stories. We post information almost daily!

**Conferences**

We are committed to providing feedback to our families on a regular basis. To that end, we will arrange for a schedule at least one individual conference, with the teacher, for every parent twice a year. In the event that additional conferencing is needed, we will arrange these on an individual, as-needed basis.

**Additional Services**

MCA will budget the following services to be provided to all enrolled children:

* Innovative learning curriculum
* Sensory integration activities
* Emphasis on discovery learning
* Coordination with community organizations who offer training, support of staff, and evaluation and support of children with learning differences
* 3-Star, the highest rating awarded by the state of Tennessee, elements: low student to teacher ratio; the appropriate amount of rug space in each classroom, developmentally appropriate toys and books; certified director and teachers, and appropriate number of full-time vs. part-time teachers
* Daily/weekly parent reports depending on age group
* Extra-curricular activities including
  + - Movement/Dance
    - Foreign Language
    - Music
    - Art

In addition, a Jewish curriculum will be provided as follows:

* Weekly Tot Shabbat service/story (Parents Welcome!)
* Holiday observances for High Holy Days, Chanukah, Tu B’Shevat, Purim and Pesach
* Hebrew through text, song, and prayers
* Jewish ethics taught through story and play

ALL ABOUT OUR DAY

**Getting Ready**

While the first day at Micah Children’s Academy is exciting, the transition to “leaving home” may be daunting to children. Our goal is to make this new experience seamless and positive. Talk to your child about school and all of the great things to look forward to. Take them shopping for a lunch bag and other school “supplies.” Tell him or her about the wonderful things that they are going to explore at school. Visit the Academy with your child and join in the fun of our family picnic (in April each year). These positive and shared experiences will ease the way.

Separation is natural and affects different children (and parents) in different ways. On your child’s first two days of school, plan to have your child arrive earlier than their normal schedule. Please make arrangements so that you can spend time in the classroom with them during this time pointing out the wonderful day ahead. When it is time to leave, please give your child a clear goodbye. Your show of confidence will enable your child to separate easily. The teachers will take over and engage your child and start developing a relationship and comforting them. If you need to check on your child’s progress during the day, please feel free to do so by calling.

**Materials Needed**

***ALL OF YOUR CHILD’S MATERIALS MUST BE LABELED WITH THEIR FULL NAME***

***Diapers***

Each child will have his or her own supply of diapers and wipes kept at the changing table or by the bathroom. The staff will notify you when your child’s supplies are low. We ask that you bring enough for one month at a time. Staff will utilize gloves when changing students and will ensure that the changing area adheres to sanitary conditions and best practices.

***Cubbies***

Each child will have a special place for all of his/her things. This "cubby" will hold art work, lunch boxes, jackets, etc. Each child should bring to school a bag or backpack which s/he will bring with him/her to hold extra clothes, etc. Please, no plastic or drawstring bags. Remember to label bags, packs and clothing.

*Items Needed Daily*(please *label everything*)

A complete set of extra clothes (***seasonally appropriate***):

* Shirt
* Sweatshirt
* Pants
* Sock and Underwear – two pair
* Shoes – extra pair
* Lunchbox (soft-sided only)
* Naptime accessories (blanket or soft toy, etc.)

***Clothing***

Children should be appropriately dressed for outdoor play and weather conditions. MCA philosophy is that children learn through exploration of their environment and materials. Your child will explore mud, water, paint, glue, etc. **Please send your child in clothing that can get dirty and stained.** It is *critical*that you replenish your child’s supply of extra clothes as needed. To ensure safety, children must wear closed-toe shoes or sandals with secure ankle straps**. Flip flops, slides, Crocs, etc. are not permitted.**

***Toys from Home***

*Children are NOT permitted to bring any toys from home*, with the exception of “transitional objects” that provide psychological comfort for sleeping. In addition, toy weapons, swords, guns, soldiers, action heroes, small and large dolls, makeup, lip gloss and balloons are not allowed. We encourage children to play with the materials provided at school. Exception: teacher-requested “show and tell.”

**Lunch and Snacks**

***Lunch***

* All children will be having lunch at school and should bring their own lunches (with the exception of special days) in **a soft lunch box** (no metal/hard boxes are permitted).
* In order to plan a nutritious lunch for your child, try to include the following in his/her meal:
  + Protein (egg, dairy, meat, soy, fish)
  + Fruit
  + Vegetable
  + Grain (bread, pasta, rice, etc.)
  + A drink
* **WE ARE NUT-SENSITIVE/FREE. No nut or nut products are permitted.**
* The Academy is not able to heat up or refrigerate lunches. We recommend sending an icepack or thermos when needed.
* The Academy follows a Kosher-style food policy. Families are **not permitted to send pork or shellfish products** in the children’s lunches. If we find these products in children’s lunch, they will be permitted to eat it on that day, but we will remind you of our policy.
* Potential chokable foods (cherry tomatoes, blueberries, grapes, hot dogs, etc.) **MUST** **be cut into very small pieces. For example, blueberries should be cut into quarters) to prevent choking. Also, make sure lunch meats and cheeses are also in very small pieces prior to putting them into the lunch container.**
* While we discuss nutrition and healthy choices with children, we do not interfere with the children’s food choices.
* We also ask that you **do not** pack candy or other sugary treats, including soft drinks, in your child’s lunch or send it in to share with others
* Children may eat their lunch items in any order they choose as we encourage them to eat a healthy lunch
* Please be sure to **label all lunchboxes and plastic food containers.**

**To ensure that we keep our 3 Star Rating, lunches must consist of a protein, 2 veggies OR 2 fruits OR 1 veggie & 1 fruit… The last page of this handbook has lunch suggestions included for your convenience.**

***Snacks***

MCA provides healthy morning and afternoon snacks that consist of two food groups. Snack menus are emailed to you monthly and are posted on the chalk board in the entry hall and on the “Calendar” page of the website. We do not serve any foods containing trans-fats or high fructose corn syrup.

***Chokables***

* **Please do not include** popcorn, nuts, whole grapes, raisins (children less than 2 years), whole cherry tomatoes, hard candy, marshmallows, or raw carrots (baby carrots included). Carrots must be cooked, diced and soft.
* MCA does not allow *necklaces*in the classroom dress-up areas, due to choking hazards. Children are not permitted to wear long necklaces (more than 6 inches) to school.

***Tips and Cautions***

To aid your child’s feeling of independence and to help alleviate confusion during lunchtime, please peel eggs and fruit with rinds (e.g. oranges) for children less than 4 years old. Please pack a plastic spoon or fork when necessary. **Please provide an ice pack for their lunch bag**. Glass bottles are not permitted.

**Nap Time**

Children who will be napping in a crib must bring a crib sheet (a pack and play sheet fits best). You may also provide a lightweight blanket or a sleep sack. For the safety of our infants, we do not swaddle and we lay our infant on their backs to sleep. You may also provide a pacifier.   
  
For those napping on a cot or mat, please provide a fitted twin sheet, a light blanket and a special comfort item (stuffed animal, pacifier, etc.).   
 **In order to prevent the spreading of illness and lice, these items should be taken home and washed each Friday, and returned to school the following Monday.**

**Birthdays**

We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday at school. If you wish to bring something special for snack time, please speak to your child's teacher to plan the celebration. If you wish to donate something to the school in honor of your child's birthday, a Children's Library Book for the Academy (a donation sticker will be placed in your child’s honor), tree or plant, or an item from the ongoing "Wish List" would be appreciated. \*\***REMEMBER, WE ARE NUT FREE.**

**Do not put invitations in cubbies or mailboxes unless you are inviting the entire class.** If you are inviting specific students, you must mail them to the student’s home.

**Health/Illness**

**Ill children need to stay at home to prevent exposure to other children and adults at school and to let children rest.** Micah Children’s Academy illness policy is based on the Model Health Care Policies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If the symptoms below are noted, we will call you to come and get your child. Children will be excluded from attending preschool for the following reasons (this list covers the most common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all reasons for exclusion):

* Illness that *prevents the child from participating comfortably* in preschool activities, including lethargy, behavioral changes, irritability and/or difficulty breathing.
* Illness that results in a greater *need for care* than our staff can provide.
* *Respiratory Illnesses & Colds*: If mucus is profuse and cannot be controlled by normal wiping, the child will be excluded *at MCA’s discretion*. A child will also be excluded if the runny nose is associated with a fever, an infected throat, persistent cough or general irritability.
* *Fever* of 100.4 (axillary)
* *Persistent Cough*, with or without fever.
* *Vomiting*
* *Diarrhea* (more than two loose stools).
* *Mouth Sores* not associated with drooling.
* *Rash*, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
* *Purulent Conjunctivitis* (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge) until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
* *Impetigo* until 24 hours after treatment.
* *Strep Throat* until 24 hours after treatment.
* *Head Lice* until after treatment and all nits are removed. Must have receipt of treatment in order to return.
* *Chickenpox*, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).
* *Pertussis* (whooping cough) until 5 days of appropriate antibiotics.
* *Hepatitis A* virus until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.

In order to assure your child’s comfort and reduce risk of contagion, we ask that sick children be picked up as soon as possible. ***Children must remain home for 24 hours without the above symptoms before returning to school***. In the case of a suspected or confirmed contagious disease, rash or continuing symptoms, a **doctor’s note is required** before your child is permitted to return to school. We will ALWAYS err on the side of children and call you when anything unusual is detected.

Excluded children may return when:

* They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for a **full 24 hours**.
* They have been treated with an antibiotic for a **full 24 hours**.
* They are able to participate comfortably in all usual preschool activities, including outdoor time.
* The child is free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling unless:
  + A health-care provider signs a note stating that the child’s condition is not contagious,
  + The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through

the bandage.

The ***final decision about whether a child must stay home or whether he/she can return to school is made by the Director***.

**MEDICATION**

**Micah Children’s Academy encourages all medications to be administered and kept at home. We understand there are occasions when medication must be administered during the school day. All medications (including Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc…) that must be administered will be given back to the family at the end of the day. Below is a list of requirements from the Tennessee Department of Human Services on the administering medication:**

All medication is kept in a lock box in the classroom. A Medication Form will accompany the actual medication and will be administered by the classroom teacher. Whenever medication is administered, it will be logged on a Medication Form.

*Prescription Medication*

Micah Children’s Academy will administer prescription medication to children after these steps have been taken:

* A signed Medication Request Form (located in your child’s classroom) has been filled out by the parent/guardian.
* The medication must be in the ***original*** container and in date. All “out of date” medications will be sent home and not administered. (Many pharmacists will fill your prescription in two labeled bottles so that one can be left at the preschool).
* **The medication has a current pharmacist’s label that includes the child’s name, medication name, dosage, current date, time(s) to be administered and the name and phone number of the child’s doctor**. A medication spoon (for liquid medications) should be provided and have the child’s name written on it. A new note is necessary each time a new medication is prescribed.

*Non-Prescription Medication*

Micah Children’s Academy will also administer non-prescription topical medication **(remember, anything we put on your child is considered to fall into this category: bug spray, suntan lotion, anti-itch lotion, etc. and a form must be filled in). These steps must be followed:**

* A signed Medication Request Form has been filled out by the parent/guardian.
* The medication must be in the original container with the child’s name written on it.
* The medication must be active and not out of date.
* Staff cannot give children more than the recommended dosage listed on the container.
* Non-prescription medication will not be administered in order to enable a sick child to be at school (i*.e. to lower a fever, etc).* These medications can be administered for toothaches, muscle aches, allergies, etc.

***Drop Off and Pick Up Routines***



**Hours of Operation**

School Day: 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Full Day: 7:00 PM to 6:00 PM

**Arrival**

Parents are to park and walk their child to school. The Academy offers a parking lot on the west corner of the Congregation Parking lot. Please use the sidewalks and enter the side of the building. You will enter the building with the key fob provided by the Academy. It is active from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm on school days only. Upon entry, you can check in your child electronically. We will use a fingerprint recognition system and all parents/caregivers are expected to adhere to this process. If the computer is down, sign in manually in the main hall and in your classroom. While everyone is given the 7 AM arrival option, you may bring them anytime between 7:00 and 9:00 for the school day.

**Departure**

Again, authorized pick-up individuals are to use the west side of the Academy parking lot. All children must be checked out electronically as they are dismissed to the parent or designated person**. All school-day pickups must be made before 3 PM; all late day pickups must be made before 6 PM---no exceptions. Without exception, those who arrive after 3:00/6:00 will be assessed a late fee.**

We know that you like to connect with the late care teachers to get an overview of the day. If you do, please arrive in advance of the check-out time (2:45 or 5:45) so that you can talk with the teacher. Keep in mind, there are other parents wanting to chat as well. If you arrive after that time, please email or call your teacher(s) to catch up. Teachers have duties to perform before they leave and keeping them from these tasks after 3:00 or 6:00 disrupts their routine and prevents their timely departure.

**Authorized Pick Up**

Parents have the opportunity to list any adult who is permitted to pick-up his/her child. If a child is to be picked up by someone not on the authorized list, the staff must have written notification signed and dated. Anyone picking up your child must show photo identification before the child will be released. Requests to prohibit a parent from picking up a child must have court documentation filed in the office.

**Using the Playscape after Hours**

Our playscape is used between the hours of 7 AM and 6 PM by those children who are under the care and responsibility of the Academy. After you pick up your child and sign out, you are no longer permitted to use the playscape. This ensures our commitment to excellent supervision and the on-going safety of the children in our care.

**PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY AND DO NOT PERMIT YOUR CHILD TO PLAY IN THE PARKING LOT; IT’S DANGEROUS!**

Curriculum Themes

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Theme** | **Suggested Sub Theme** |
| **August** | **Friendship**  Re’ut  רֵעוּת  True and enduring friendship can only be built on a foundation of giving | Making Good Choices, Kindness, Power of Speech, Judging Favorably, Redemption, Returning |
| **September** | **New Beginnings**  Hithadshut  חַדְשׁוּתהִתְ  New beginnings can produce positive growth on many levels: individual, group, and national. | In God’s Image, Guarding Your Health, Dignity, Holiness, Humility, Learning Torah, Perseverance |
| **October** | **Community**  Kehillah  קְהִילָה  Membership in our diverse Jewish community is a precious thing. We belong simultaneously to several communities and have responsibilities to each. | Justice, Social Action, Freedom, Mutual Responsibility, Righteous Giving, The Power of Rescue, Truth |
| **November** | **Appreciation**  Hakarat Hatov  הַטוֹב הַכָּרַת  Expressing appreciation to others and to God helps us feel greater empathy and cultivates positive feelings and healthy relationships. | Prayer  Family  Family Harmony  Hope  Personal Satisfaction |
| **December** | **Chain of Traditions**  Shalshelet Hamesorah  **הַמְסוֹרָה שַׁלְשֶׁלֶת**  Our beliefs and practices link us in a chain of tradition with previous generations, while our creativity adds new links to that chain. | Festivals of Joy  Miracles and Wonders  Cherishing the Elderly  Remembrance |
| **January** | **Peace**  Shalom  שָׁלוֹם  Shalom means completeness and wholeness not only in our relationships with family and friends, but also with God. | Courage  Heroism  Freedom  Hospitality  Leadership |

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| **February** | **Protecting the Environment**  L'avdah u'leshamrah  וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ לְעָבְדָהּ  God not only gave humans dominion over the environment, but also commanded us to protect and care for it. | Avoiding Waste  Respecting Animals |
| **March/April**  **OR** | **Finding Beauty**  Yofi  יוֹפִי  There is beauty created by God, beauty created by people, beauty found inside of us, and beauty we perceive in others. | Happiness  How We’ve Grown/Continue to Grow  Creative Arts |
| **March/April** | **Celebration of Life**  L’Chaim  לְחַיִּים  *(add this in for the two months)* | Happiness  Creative Arts  Miracles and Wonders |
| **May** | **Unity**  Achdut  אַחְדוּת  The Jewish people are united by a common land, language, heritage, fate, and culture. It is important that we put aside our differences for our common goals | Celebrate Jerusalem  Ingathering of Exiles to Israel  Love of the Land of Israel  Love of Zion  Knowledge of Israel |

June and July are dedicated to fun, camp-like themes and is at the discretion of our classroom teachers.

*Lunch Suggestions*

* Applesauce or a fruit cup
* Bagel with cream cheese/spread
* Bean or vegetable burrito
* Breadsticks
* Cheese and crackers, or cheese sticks/string cheese
* Egg or tuna salad
* Fresh fruit (cut into small pieces; including all berries)
* Fruit salad (cut into small pieces; including all berries)
* Hummus and pita
* Mac-and-cheese (or another item brought in a Thermos, such as spaghetti)
* Muffins
* Pasta—with sauce or as a salad with cheese, egg, tuna and/or whatever veggies they will eat
* Peaches or bananas in yogurt or cottage cheese
* Pizza or pizza bagels (cut into small pieces)
* Raisins (only students 2 years or older)
* Sandwiches: meat (cut small), hummus; tuna; egg salad; cheese, Sunflower butter,etc…
* Tofu
* Veggies (all carrots must be steamed)
* Yogurt
* **No Nuts:** We are a nut-sensitive/ free school. This is includes peanut butter, hazelnut spread etc…