



## **FAMILY HANDBOOK 2022-2023**

2001 Old Hickory Boulevard  
Brentwood, Tennessee 37027  
Phone: 615-942-5162

Website: [www.micahchildrensacademy.org](http://www.micahchildrensacademy.org)  
Email: [rpachmayr@micahchildrensacademy.org](mailto:rpachmayr@micahchildrensacademy.org)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## All About Micah Children's Academy

Welcome Letter.....	3
Introductory Information .....	4
Mission.....	4

## All About Our Program

Education Philosophy .....	5
Our Educators .....	5
Our School Culture .....	5
Our Role .....	5
Your Role .....	5
Monthly Curriculum Themes .....	6
Our Enrichments .....	6
Classroom Size/Ratio .....	7
Program by Age Group .....	8
Classroom Management .....	9
Behavior Policies .....	9
Communication with Families .....	10
Conferences .....	11
Outside Play .....	11
School Calendar/Holidays .....	12
Logistics, Policies, Procedures .....	13
Location/Hours of Operation .....	13
Enrollment .....	13
Vacation Days and Absences .....	13
Inclement Weather .....	13
Tuition .....	14
Fees .....	14
Withdrawal .....	15
Health/Illness .....	16
COVID.....	17
Medications .....	19
Immunizations.....	20

## All About Our Day

Getting Ready .....	21
Materials Needed .....	21
Lunch and Snacks .....	22
Nap Time .....	24



---

2001 Old Hickory Boulevard | Brentwood, Tennessee 37027 | Phone: 615-942-5162 | [www.micahchildrensacademy.org](http://www.micahchildrensacademy.org)

Dear Academy Families,

We are excited to welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year! You hold a very special role in the joy, growth, and community of Micah Children's Academy. Together we will continue to build a strong program that begins and ends with what is best for our children!

The Micah Children's Academy (the Academy) Family Handbook explains school policies and procedures. Its purpose is to inform readers on topics such as our mission, educational philosophy, and curricula. By enrolling your child(ren) at the Academy, you agree to comply with these policies and procedures. Please take the time to review this Handbook carefully and refer to it as needed. The policies and procedures described herein support the mission and vision of our school, and build integrity, trust, and respect among all members of our community. We share these expectations of conduct and communication with you to support a healthy school community. I hope you will not hesitate to contact me throughout the year if you have any questions about this Handbook, or if there is anything else we can do together to create the community we all want for Micah Children's Academy.

Here's to a fantastic school year where our children are engaged in enriching activities that provide them with ample opportunity to create, problem solve, and discover the world through all their senses!

*Rachel Pachmayr*

Director

# ABOUT MICAH CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

## **Micah Children's Academy Introduction**

Micah Children's Academy provides a warm and thriving environment where children aged six weeks through Pre-K actively discover and expand their imagination and minds. Our school is conveniently located on a beautiful, lush, expansive property on the Williamson and Davidson County line, serving families of Nashville, Brentwood, Franklin, and beyond. We proudly serve up to 84 students in our full-day early learning center. Our students experience a values-based, emergent curriculum that focuses on the development of the whole child. At its core, the Micah Children's Academy is a nurturing place where a love for lifelong learning is fostered. Children are engaged in enriching activities where they can create, problem solve, and discover the world through all their senses.

## **Congregation Micah**

Micah Children's Academy is located in the education wing of 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. Congregation Micah has adopted the words of Micah (6:8), the Biblical prophet and civil rights advocate as its congregational message of equality and welcome for all: *"Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with thy God."*

MCA works with Congregation Micah clergy and staff to enrich our program's Jewish values-based curriculum, including a weekly "Tot-Shabbat" program.

## **Micah Children's Academy Mission**

The Micah Children's Academy provides an educational environment that honors each child within the context of their development, family, and culture, while being leaders in early childhood education. Our Academy cultivates a love for learning—cognitive, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and verbal—and a thriving intergenerational and diverse community committed to growing the intellectual curiosity and moral consciousness of students and families based on Jewish values.

# ALL ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

## **Micah Children's Academy Educational Philosophy**

Micah Children's Academy was created with the vision of age-appropriate, play-based learning that integrates the best of early childhood education theories and research-based best practices. The Academy strives to focus on the whole child and scaffold growth in each developmental domain by structuring our day with a variety of learning opportunities where children can construct their own knowledge. We integrate our Jewish values, art, sensory experiences, music, movement, love and awe of nature, math, and science into our every day.

## **Our Educators**

Our educators build classroom communities that are inclusive and reflective of each child, family, and culture. They place value on facilitating an environment that is positive, supportive, and reflective of the conviction that: (1) childhood is sacred (2) children learn best through their play and by constructing their own knowledge, (3) children's imaginations need to be nurtured and inspired, (4) children are capable of great empathy, (5) children are capable problem-solvers, and (6) children are best guided by thoughtful questions, redirection, an age-appropriate natural and logical consequences.

## **Our School Culture**

The Academy strives to be an engaging place for not only our students but our families. We understand the importance of building strong relationships with our families that are built upon mutual trust and respect with open communication. You are your child's first and most important teacher and it is a joy to partner with you on your journey!

## **Our Role**

As educators, we pride ourselves on our abilities to understand each child's own individual development while facilitating and celebrating their growth as they master new milestones. One of our roles in our partnership with our families is to articulate the developmental needs and growth of the child in approachable ways. This can be evidenced in the displays of children's work, our weekly newsletters, sharing of daily happenings and yearly parent-teacher conferences.

Our other main role in this partnership is to listen to the joys, stories, and concerns our families share with us about their child and lives outside of school. We strive to be active listeners to gain more insights about your child and the goals you have for them. This helps us all understand where the child is at, where they are going, and how we can help get them there.

## **Your Role**

We want to see our families actively engaged in their child's formative education and our community. We urge families to have open discussion with our educators and our administrative team about their child. We hope you will first talk with our educators. If you need assistance in navigating the situation our administrative team is here to help!

We hope the Academy is not only formative for your child, but for you in your role as a parent. Engaging in community with others at the Academy can help you build a system of support needed to navigate all that parenting encompasses. Micah Children's Academy will provide opportunities for families to be actively engaged in our community throughout the school year. This takes place in a variety of ways, such as volunteering for "room parent" assignments, invites to school-wide and classroom specific events, fundraising events, parent engagement meetings, and other volunteer opportunities.

### **Our Monthly Curriculum Themes**

August	New Begins – <i>Hitchadshut</i>
September	Forgiveness – <i>Slichah</i>
October	Community – <i>Kehilla</i>
November	Appreciation – <i>Hakarat Hatov</i>
December	Month of Light – <i>Chodesh Urim</i>
January	Protecting the Environment – <i>L'avadah u'leshamrah</i>
February	Justice/Charity – <i>Tzedakah</i>
March	Cheerfulness – <i>Savayer Panim Yafot</i>
April	Repairing the World – <i>Tikkun Olam</i>
May	Honor Parent/Teacher – <i>Kibbud Horim u'Morim</i>

*June and July are at the discretion of our educators.*

### **Our Enrichments**

Each week, specialized educators will lead students in enriching, play-based activities that build upon the mission and classroom curricula of Micah Children's Academy. These specialized weekly activities will take place 10 months out of the school year and are as follows:

- **Music:** Cantor Goldberg will enrich our students' lives with his musical talents, allowing students to explore various instruments, musical games and songs in both Hebrew and English.
- **Judaic:** As children learn the Jewish culture through their explorations daily, our Judaic leaders will strengthen their understanding through songs, stories, games, and rituals. The Hebrew language will be introduced in meaningful ways.
- **Vibes:** Vibes stands for Voice, Imagination, Body Exercises and storytelling. The goal of this enrichment is to strengthen students' body awareness and abilities to self-regulate. Using songs and stories as our base, students will be led through engaging whole-body movements, vocalizations, and imaginative play. Much of what takes place lends to creative self-expression, mindfulness, and theatrics.
- **Nature:** With Congregation Micah's beautiful campus, the Academy has ample opportunities to engage with nature. Our gardens give real-life experiences to

understand life cycles and how to care for our Earth. Children are not only exploring, cultivating, growing, and tending to all the nature our campus provides, they are using these opportunities to build foundational math and science knowledge through activities that engage their whole body, mind, and spirit.

**Our Classroom Size/Ratios**

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

<b>CLASSROOM</b>	<b>AGE GROUP</b>	<b>ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>*STUDENT / TEACHER RATIO</b>
<b>Infant 1</b>	6 weeks to almost 1 year	4 per classroom	4:1
<b>Infant 2</b>	6 weeks to almost 1 year	8 per classroom	4:1
<b>Toddlers</b>	Younger 1 turning 2	10 per classroom	6:1
<b>Tiny Tots 1</b>	Older 1 turning 2	11 per classroom	6:1
<b>Tiny Tots 2</b>	2 turning 3	12 per classroom	7:1
<b>Minis 1</b>	3 turning 4	12 per classroom	9:1
<b>Minis 2</b>	3 ½ turning 4 ½	13 per classroom	9:1 (with 3yr olds) 13:1 (all 4 year olds)
<b>Pre-K</b>	4 turning 5	15 per classroom	13:1

## **Our Program by Age Group**

### **Infants and Toddlers**

Infants and toddlers view and learn about their world through their senses and physical actions. We place our emphasis on providing a peaceful environment that is also sensory-rich for developing minds. The classroom environment is language rich as educators sing, read, and verbally map the day's activities with the children. We place a value on children's social and emotional development and know that in this stage of life they are learning to trust the world through their caregivers. As such, we go well beyond meeting their basic needs. Children are held, nurtured, and soothed. A variety of objects can be found in their environment to see and explore, and we provide ample opportunities for children to develop relationships with educators and other children.

### **Tiny Tots 1 and 2**

Our infants and younger toddler classrooms have laid the foundation for children to develop their abilities to solve their problems with their peers in socially acceptable ways. With their developing language skills and rapid growth in their social and emotional development, our tiny tots are continuing what we hope will be a life-long journey of learning conflict resolution strategies, emotional awareness, empathy, and compassion. To this end, students will work in both small and large groups learning to work together, problem-solve, respect one another, and find their own unique and special talents. They will begin to build their core language, reading, and math skills during play, and will experience their expanding world through science and physical activity.

### **Minis 1 and 2**

Each Mini is actively developing their own unique personhood, with individualized patterns 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, literacy, physical skills, dramatic play, block play, and creative movement. Their very different learning styles are considered when developing appropriate activities for our Minis. Our educators put great care into observing the children in their play and using the insights gained to create their lesson plans.

### **Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)**

Building on the Minis learning experiences, our Pre-K program offers a balance of play and structured individual and group activities. We strive to create an environment where children are awed, inspired and eager to learn more. Literacy, math, and science experiences are expanded upon in meaningful ways. Experiences are provided that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas. Children are encouraged to select many of their own activities from the various learning center areas. Micah Children's Academy believes that children learn best when they have intrinsic motivation, with educators scaffolding their learning with thoughtful questions and ponderings.



## **Classroom Management**

We strive to provide a respectful environment for children where the emphasis is on learning self-regulation skills. This requires educators to help children gain a deep understanding of emotions, empathy, and conflict resolution strategies. In order to reach this goal, we employ the best of developmental theories while integrating many of the “Conscious Discipline” processes and High Scope Conflict Resolution Strategies in age-appropriate ways.

Each child’s development has its own unique characteristics, strengths and areas of growth, challenges and needs. The Academy educators are well versed and trained in classroom and behavior management. When challenges arise on a consistent basis, children are communicating. The Academy believes that their responsibility as the adults in the school/classroom community is to figure out the “why” of the challenging behavior. Educators will rely on their skills, experiences, support from our administration, and their families to best understand and support children’s needs.

Our teachers model appropriate behavior and offer positive guidance. Our aim is to help children feel good about themselves as they learn socially acceptable behavior and how to engage in responsible ways.

### **We believe and support...**

- a “yes” environment that encourages strong self-esteem and positive behavior
- providing children with methods and processes that build self-regulation and conflict resolution strategies
- helping each child understand what is expected of them
- empowering students to make appropriate choices
- positive redirection techniques
- respect for all and the world at large
- natural and logical consequences
- clear communication and problem-solving skills

### **We do not believe nor support...**

- corporal punishment of any kind
- handling children harshly
- 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 appropriate, 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 educators work 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 the punishment of the biting, but on practical techniques to address the reasons for biting. The child will not understand delayed punishment at home. **Reports** will be written for the child who was bitten and will be given to parents of the bitten child.

Educators and our administration will work with families of the child who bit and the bitten child to keep them informed. We will make every effort to modify the behavior quickly. 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. Shared information typically includes the details of the event itself, the time and place it happened, 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. Educators do not reveal the identity of the child who engaged in aggressive behavior with the victim's family, or the identity of the victim of the aggressive behavior with the aggressor's family. We place high value on maintaining the confidentiality of each child's records.

## **Communication with Our Families**

We believe consistent and transparent communication is the foundation to a healthy and robust school/parent/student relationship. We communicate with families through the following avenues:

- Daily reports [via Brightwheel](#) for younger children
- Weekly teacher-generated online newsletter for each classroom
- Informational emails sent throughout the month from the Director of the Academy
- A Chalk Board, updated regularly, in our entry hall

- At least one parent meeting, parent training workshop, or other parent engagement is offered quarterly
- On-going handouts for families that highlight ideas, suggestions, and updates
- Samples of student work and/or projects
- A listing of current community resources available to all parents

### **Conferences**

We are committed to providing feedback to our families on a regular basis. To that end, the option to schedule an individual conference is available to you at any time. Annual conferences will be held for all students in February to provide feedback regarding your child's progress and development. Pre-K will have scheduled conferences in both the fall and spring in preparation for their kindergarten year.

### **Outside Play**

At Micah Children's Academy, we pride ourselves on helping children grow mentally, spiritually, and physically. And because of this, we strive to take advantage of Congregation Micah's beautiful campus. Our goal is to provide our students with outdoor playtime every day. Dress your child appropriately. State regulations mandate that students are to play outside unless the "feel like" temperature registers below 32 degrees (F) or 95 (F) degrees or higher. Please also send appropriate accessories so that they can go outside (gloves, hats, etc.). Hats are strongly recommended all year round. Please be sure to apply sunscreen and bug spray **before** arriving at school. If you would like bug spray and/or sunscreen reapplied, please be sure to bring the bug spray and sunscreen to school, along with the required forms, which can be found on our [website](#).

## 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

August 1 <sup>st</sup>	First Day of School
September 5 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Labor Day
September 26 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Rosh Hashanah
October 4 <sup>th</sup>	Closed Early for Kol Nidre (Yom Kippur Eve) @ 3:30 PM
October 5 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Yom Kippur
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Simchat Torah Parade
October 17 <sup>th</sup> Week	Pre-K Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 23 <sup>rd</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Thanksgiving Break
December 21 <sup>st</sup>	Chanukah Festival
Dec. 22 <sup>nd</sup> - Jan. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Closed for Winter Break
January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	School Resumes
January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tu B'Shevat Seder
February 7 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Purim Costume Tot Shabbat
March 13 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Spring Break
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Closed Early for Passover @ 3:30 PM
April 7 <sup>th</sup>	Passover Seder
April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Israel Day Celebration
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Festival
May 24 <sup>th</sup>	Shavuot Celebration
May 25 <sup>th</sup>	Pre-K Graduation
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Teacher In-Service
May 29 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Memorial Day
May 30 <sup>th</sup>	First Day of Pre-K Summer Camp
June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Juneteenth
July 4 <sup>th</sup>	Closed for Independence Day
July 24 <sup>th</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup>	Closed for Teacher In-Service
August 1 <sup>st</sup>	First Day of 2022-2023 School Year

## **Logistics, Policies, and Procedures**

### **Location**

Micah Children's Academy is located at Congregation Micah, 2001 Old Hickory Boulevard - at the corner of Hillsboro Road and Old Hickory Blvd. The Academy uses the classrooms in the Education Wing of Congregation Micah, and the playscape on the western side of the building.

### **Hours of Operation**

Our operating hours are 7:30 AM TO 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

Our school day hours are from 7:30 AM TO 3:30 PM. Children not enrolled in our extended program must be checked out no later than 3:30 PM. Additional charges apply if pick up occurs after 3:30 PM.

If you enrolled in our extended program (7:30 AM to 5:30 PM) children must be checked out no later than 5:30 PM. Additional charges apply for late pick up, after 5:30 PM.

### **Enrollment**

Priority is given to Congregation Micah members, siblings, and then members of the larger community. The Academy has a non-discrimination policy; although there is Jewish content, non-Jewish children are welcome to enroll. Once a family has agreed to an enrollment spot, the placement cannot be held without full tuition payments being made. For example, if a spot becomes available February 1<sup>st</sup> and a family is offered that spot, the family must pay the tuition for that spot beginning on February 1<sup>st</sup> even if the child does not start to attend MCA until a later date. [This is different from offers of future enrollment that begin with a new school year. In those cases, tuition payments are not required until the commencement of that school year.]

### **Vacation Days and other Absences**

Micah Children's Academy will be closed on the dates shown in the 2022-2023 School Calendar above. We are unable to provide full or partial discounts or refunds if a child is absent, for any reason, when the Academy is open.

### **Inclement Weather and Snow Days**

All attempts will be made to stay open throughout the winter months. However, conditions may force us to close. Our closing is determined by two factors:

If the roads surrounding the Academy 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 inform you via our text alert system, Brightwheel, 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 via text alert

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 weather conditions can deteriorate quickly. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer full or partial discounts or refunds for inclement weather closings or for any other environmental closings, such as (but not limited to) power outages.

**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 the Academy, but to serve as an information resource for our families. Families have access to materials and information that will be useful throughout the year.

- All forms (Change of Schedule, Medication, Field Trip Permission, Movie Permission, etc.)
- Your Family Handbook
- Calendars (events and holidays)
- Blogs about our Enrichment activities and so much more

## **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 a \$150.00 per student (maximum of \$250.00) pre-registration fee in February to secure their spot for the following school year.

**Enrichment Fee:** A fee of \$250 per student (maximum of \$435 per family) will be assessed at the beginning of each school year for existing and new families.

*(Registration, pre-registration and enrichment fees are non-refundable and are not credited against tuition payments. These fees cover administrative expenses, and enrichment materials for your children.)*

## **Tuition**

Micah Children's Academy tuition is paid in equal installments across the 12-month contract and is due on the first of each month. Unless you change your child's schedule (see Change of Schedule below), add a drop-in day or late care for a day, (with approval of the Director or Assistant Director), incur a late pick-up fee, or purchase an extra key fob, your tuition charges will be the same each month. A monthly invoice is provided at the end of the previous month for you to review and confirm that the amount is accurate. **We collect all tuition payments via automatic withdrawal.** It is your responsibility to provide us with a canceled or voided check for the account from which your tuition is to be deducted. Your tuition is considered late after the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month. A \$30.00 late fee will be assessed to your tuition for all late payments. Payments not received after 45 days will be turned over for collection.

### **Late Pick-Up Fee**

Children are to be picked up no later than the end of their scheduled time (3:30 for School Day students and 5:30 for Extended Day students.) Families will be charged \$25 per child for each 15 minutes (or portion thereof) that they are late to pick up. In those rare and unusual circumstances when you may be late to pick up (e.g., unexpected traffic delays), please notify our office as soon as possible that you will be late. You will still be charged our late pick-up fees, but this notice will allow us to help staff these unusual circumstances and help manage the expectations and concerns your child(ren) may have because of this change in their routine.

### **Change of Schedule**

All schedule changes require a ***Change of Schedule Form***. Changes must be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> 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 family submits a signed notification letter of withdrawal.

**Per the signed Micah Children's Academy Application Form, enrolled families agree to furnish the Academy with at least forty-five (45) days advance written notice of such withdrawal.** If the enrolled family fails to provide such written notice, they remain responsible for the full tuition for the calendar month following their child's last day of attendance. This includes the months of July to August, if you have registered for the following school year which begins in August.

## Health/Illness

### Sick children need to stay at home to prevent exposure to others at school and to allow sick children to rest and recover.

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 pick up your child. Children will be excluded from attending school for the following reasons (this list covers the most common illnesses, but does not include all reasons for exclusion):

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in school 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 the 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 or above (axillary or temporal)
- Persistent Cough, with or without fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (two or more 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 eye 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.
- Hand, Foot & Mouth until 48 hours fever free and no active blisters on visible/uncovered parts of body
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days)
- Pertussis (whooping cough) until five days of appropriate antibiotics
- Hepatitis A virus until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered

For your child's comfort and to reduce the 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,*** unless noted next to the illness.

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.

Excluded children may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea for a **full 24 hours** (without the aid of medications)
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for a **full 24 hours**
- They can participate comfortably in all usual preschool activities, including outdoor time
- The child is free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling unless:
  - ⇒ A healthcare provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious,
  - ⇒ The problematic 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 the child may return to school is made by the Director.**

## **COVID Related Policies**

As of July 2022 and subject to change

### **Masking**

- Will remain optional for our children and staff. If you would like your child to mask during school whenever possible, please let the office and your child's teacher(s) know.
- Children and staff will now be mask-optional during times of cohort mixing. If you would like your child to mask during times of cohort mixing, please let the office and your child's teacher(s) know.
- Will be optional for our families during normal drop-off and pick-ups
- Will be **REQUIRED** for visitors or anyone, even our families, who are staying for lengths longer than the normal drop-off and pick-ups. (i.e. Tot Shabbat, parent-teacher conferences, school events and gatherings)

### **Illness Policy**

- Will be back to our pre-COVID 24-hour symptom-free for MOST illnesses (exceptions are illnesses the State requires a longer absence for and COVID positive cases – see below)
- A test to return or a doctor's note with clearance will be required for illnesses that share COVID symptoms (cough, fever, runny nose, other symptoms at the discretion of the Director).
  - Test must be administered the day of the child's return.
  - Test may be administered at home, with a photo uploaded to Brightwheel or emailed to the office. The photo must have the following:
    - Test taken with clear reading
    - Device with the date and time on it

***\*On a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Director, a daily test to return may be required for the period of lingering symptoms.***

## Quarantines

CLOSE CONTACT as defined by the CDC (Close Contact through proximity and duration of exposure: Someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).

- \*Fully vaccinated with record/card on file:
  - Test to return daily for 5 days, so long as MCA staffing allows
  - Test must be administered the day of the child's return
  - Test may be administered at home, with a photo uploaded to Brightwheel or emailed to the office. The photo must include:
    - Test taken with clear reading
    - Device with the date and time on it
  - Must remain symptom-free
  - Will be required to mask whenever possible if 30 months or older
  
- \*COVID positive within 90 days prior to the exposure with evidence of case on file:
  - Test to return daily for 5 days, so long as MCA staffing allows
  - Test must be administered the day of the child's return
  - Test may be administered at home, with a photo uploaded to Brightwheel or emailed to the office. The photo must include:
    - Test taken with clear reading
    - Device with the date and time on it
  - Must remain symptom-free
  - Will be required to mask whenever possible if 30 months or older
  
- \*Not fully vaccinated:
  - 5 days of quarantine with day of exposure being DAY 0 (zero)
  - Can return on DAY 6 (six) if:
    - Symptom-free
    - Test to return taken on DAY 5 or after
    - Test may be administered at home, with a photo uploaded to Brightwheel or emailed to the office. The photo must include:
      - Test taken with clear reading
      - Device with the date and time on it

HOME EXPOSURE is defined as anyone residing within the household or person(s) with ongoing daily contact with the child being COVID positive.

- 7 days of quarantine, regardless of vaccination status, with day of the COVID positive test result being DAY 0 (zero)
- Can return on DAY 8 (eight) if:
  - Symptom-free
  - Test to return taken on DAY 8 or after
  - Test may be administered at home, with a photo uploaded to Brightwheel or emailed to the office. The photo must have the following:
    - Test taken with clear reading

- Device with the date and time on it

***\*Please note that the child will start back at day zero with each subsequent household positive case***

TESTS POSITIVE:

- 10 days of quarantine, regardless of vaccination status with the positive test result being DAY 0 (zero)

## **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 each day.

All medication is kept in a lockbox in the classroom. A Medication Form will accompany the medication and will be administered by the classroom teacher. When 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*** manufacturer container and in date and cannot be past their expiration date. All expired medications will be sent home and will not be administered.
- **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, sunscreen, anti-itch lotion, etc. and a form must be filled out). 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 the medication.
- The medication must be active and not expired.
- 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.). Parents may request that these medications be administered for toothaches, muscle aches, allergies, etc. only with a signed Medication Request Form.

### **Immunizations**

Micah Children's Academy requires that all students be up to date on their State required immunizations. Religious exemptions will not be accepted. Please submit an updated immunization record with each new school year and anytime your child receives a recent vaccination. **Please see the above COVID policy for current information about COVID vaccinations for your child.**

### **Medical Emergencies**

All educators and staff are trained in CPR and First Aid as part of the Academy's intensive orientation. All educators and staff will be CPR and First Aid certified within their first academic year at Micah Children's Academy. At all times, at least one person who is CPR and First Aid certified will be on campus. If a medical emergency takes place on the Academy's campus, our educators and staff will follow protocols to immediately notify for help while assessing and addressing the situation at hand. 911 will be called for medical support, prior to calling a child's parent/guardian. If the child's parent/guardian cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact will be called. Our team will always do our best to react quickly and effectively while communicating and following parents' choices if a child needs to be transported to a hospital. Medical situations are treated as confidential.

## Getting Ready

While the first day at Micah Children's Academy is exciting, the transition of "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. One suggestion would be to take them shopping for a lunch bag and other school "supplies." Tell them about the wonderful things that they will explore at school. These positive and shared experiences will ease the way.

Separation is natural and affects children (and families) differently. Be positive in your talk around starting school and make sure you convey to your child that he/she will have a wonderful day ahead. Prepare them for the drop-off procedures and let them know what your "goodbye" routine will be. 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 educators 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 message your classroom via Brightwheel or call the office at any time.

## Materials Needed

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

### Diapers

Each child will have their 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 their things. This "cubby" will hold artwork, lunch boxes, jackets, etc.

Each child should bring to school a bag or backpack which s/he will bring with him/her to hold bedding items, etc. Please, no plastic or drawstring bags. Remember to label bags, packs, and clothing. **Please do not leave any items that are labeled "keep out of reach of children" in your child's bags/cubby (e.g., medication, lotions, etc.).**

### Items Needed Daily (please label everything)

A complete set of extra clothes (seasonally appropriate):

- Shirt
- Sweatshirt
- Pants
- Socks and Underwear – two pairs
- Shoes – extra pair
- Lunchbox (soft-sided only)
- Naptime items (a nap mat is preferred...please see classroom supply list for details)

- Rainboots and Rain Jacket
- Extra set of masks for ages 2 years and older for instances when masking may be deemed necessary

## Clothing

Children need to be appropriately dressed for outdoor play and weather conditions. The Academy's philosophy is that children learn by exploring 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.** You must replenish your child's supply of extra clothes as needed. **Children must wear closed-toe shoes with secure ankle straps. Flip flops, slides, Crocs, etc. are not permitted. A pair of rain boots that can stay at school are also required.**

## Toys from Home

Children are NOT permitted to bring any toys from home, except "transitional objects" that provide psychological comfort for sleeping. In addition, toy weapons, swords, guns, soldiers, action heroes, small and large dolls, makeup, lip gloss, necklaces, 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

All children have two (2) snacks and a lunch at school; families are responsible for providing these. Lunch must be packed in a soft lunch box (no metal/hard boxes are permitted) and freezer packs. Please make sure these containers are labeled.

To plan a nutritious lunch for your child, please include the following in each lunch:

- ⇒ (1) Protein (egg, dairy, meat, soy, fish)
  - ⇒ (1) Fruit & (1) Vegetable -OR- (2) Vegetables o (1) Grain (bread, pasta, rice, etc.)
- The Academy is not able to heat up or refrigerate lunches. We recommend sending an ice pack or thermos when needed.
  - The Academy follows a Kosher-style food policy. Families are not permitted to send pork or shellfish products to school.
  - Children may eat their lunch items in any order they choose.
  - Please be sure to label all lunch boxes and plastic food containers.
  - To encourage healthy eating habits for life, please do not pack candy or other sugary treats, including soft drinks, in your child's lunch. Likewise, please do not send these sorts of treats to school to share with others.
  - While we discuss nutrition and healthy choices with children, we do not interfere with the children's food choices.
  - Micah Children's Academy will provide 2% milk with students' lunches for all classrooms except our Infant classrooms

## **Chokeables**

Please do not include popcorn, whole grapes, raisins (children under two years old), whole cherry tomatoes, hard candy, marshmallows, or raw, whole carrots (baby carrots included). Please cut round, chokeable foods lengthwise for children of all ages (quartered for younger students and halved for older students).

Micah Children's Academy does not allow necklaces in classroom dress-up areas due to choking hazards. Children are not permitted to wear long necklaces (more than 6") to school. Children under two years old are not permitted to wear necklaces of any kind.

## **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 under four 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. Bento-style lunch containers are preferred: <https://tinyurl.com/y576cwk7>

## **Allergies**

Our educators and administrators will work with families to ensure that children with food allergies have a safe eating environment. In cases where a child has an allergy that can include reactions to airborne particles and/or limited contacts with said item, steps may include asking families to avoid packing these products.

## **Snack and Lunch Suggestions**

- Applesauce or a fruit cup (without choking hazard fruits)
- Bagel with cream cheese/spread
- Bean or vegetable burrito
- Cheese and crackers, or cheese sticks/string cheese
- Egg or tuna salad
- Fresh fruit (cut into pieces appropriate for the child's age and abilities; larger round fruits should be cut lengthwise)
- Hummus and pita and/or veggies
- Mac-and-cheese (or another item brought in a Thermos, such as spaghetti)
- Whole Grain 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 pieces appropriate for the child's age and abilities)
- Raisins (only students two years or older)
- Sandwiches: meat (cut into pieces appropriate for the child's age and abilities), hummus; tuna; egg salad; cheese, sunflower butter, etc.
- Tofu
- Veggies (all carrots must be steamed and/or cut lengthwise)
- Yogurt
- Avocado slices
- Tortilla roll-ups with sun-butter and jam, or roll-ups with turkey and cheese
- Cheese quesadillas
- Mini veggie quiches

- Pancake sandwiches with apple butter and sun-butter
- Trail mix with dried fruit, pumpkin seeds, and sunflower seeds (ages two years or older)

### **Nap Time**

Children who will be napping in a crib must bring a pack and play sheet. You may also provide a sleep sack (without wings), footed PJs, or Magic Merlin sleepsuit. We do not swaddle, and we lay our infants on their backs to sleep. You may also provide a pacifier, however WubbaNubs are not allowed.

For those napping on a cot or mat, a nap mat is preferred - or you can provide a *fitted sheet (crib or twin depending on the classroom)* with a light blanket. You can also bring a special comfort item (stuffed animal, pacifier, etc.). **To prevent the spreading of illness and lice, these items are sent home to be washed each Friday and must be returned to school the following Monday.**

For more information on recommended nap mats please visit <https://wildkin.com/collections/nap-mats-1> use the code WILDKIN30 for 30% off)

---

Thank you for taking the time to read the MCA Family Handbook. While no handbook can anticipate all situations, we have prepared this based on our experience of the types of questions parents may have. All policies and procedures are subject to change.

If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please reach out to your child(ren)'s teachers, the Director or the Assistant Director.