



PRESCHOOL

**Parent Handbook
2021-2022**

3 Brooklyn Locations

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Welcome

Welcome to Chai Tots Preschool.

Thank you for choosing us as the “home away from home” for your child. We are proud to offer a creative environment where your child’s individual style of learning is valued and nurtured. We advise parents and guardians to carefully read this handbook to help ease the transition into school.

We welcome and value your input. It is our hope that you will become involved in your child’s educational experience by sharing your time and talents.

Mission and Philosophy

At Chai Tots we endeavor to:

- Nourish your child’s heart and mind, as we teach scholastic, emotional, social and physical knowledge, so that your child will be an educated, well-rounded person, capable of solving problems and adapting to new situations.
- Encourage your child to make choices, with respect for themselves, others and their surroundings. This helps develop your child's self-esteem, self-efficacy and shows them that they can contribute to the world.
- Educate your child in a creative, supportive, and warm Jewish environment, so that your child will not only learn about life as a Jew, but will learn to love it too.
- Chai Tots seeks to create a stimulating and enriching educational environment for each and every child. We are devoted to helping children learn socialization skills, building their self-confidence, and teaching them the preliminary skills to explore and experience the world independently from their parents.
- Strive to provide children with the early foundation and framework to prepare them for the transition to elementary school. In addition, we seek to ignite a spark in each child to lay claim to their Jewish heritage and commit to a lifetime passion for learning.

Chai Tots admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin in all the rights, programs and activities made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, athletic or other school-administered programs.

About Us

Chai Tots Preschool provides a stimulating and safe environment where your child’s individual style of learning is valued and nurtured. Known for our level of individual care and attention to each child, we keep the class size small. This enables the teachers to carefully tune in to every child’s specific needs.

A comprehensive secular curriculum includes reading readiness, numeracy, science and social studies.

Your child’s experience will also include rich and meaningful Jewish traditions and the Hebrew Aleph Beit and language, taught through music, art, creative play and structured lessons.

Each child who joins Chai Tots Preschool becomes a part of the Chai Tots family. Each teacher is a certified early childhood educator who brings a unique and special blend of professional skills and personal experience to her job. These teachers are an unusually dedicated group of professionals whose commitment to each child under their tutelage does not stop at the classroom door.

General Information and Registration

Program Ages and Hours

We offer flexible programming to meet your needs for children 18 months through 5 years of age.

	2 Half Days	2 Full Days	3 Half Days	3 Full Days	5 Half Days	5 Full Days
Toddlers 18-24 Months	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jr. Nursery 2-3 Years	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nursery 3-4 Years			✓*	✓*	✓	✓
Pre-K 4-5 Years						✓

*Although we allow a 3 day program for this age group, we strongly recommend the 5 day option.

Please note that each site has different age groups.

Half Day: 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Full Day: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Important Notes:

- During the winter months, Friday dismissal is at 2:00 PM for full day students.
- There are no makeup days for a child’s absence due to illness, vacation, or for days when school is closed.
- With enough interest, there is Early Care drop-off from 8:00am-9:00am and After Care late pick-up until 6:00pm. All Early and After Care reservations must be arranged and prepaid in monthly increments. Early and After Care is \$15 per hour paid the month prior in cash. Any other arrangements and last minute requests must be approved by the Site Director. **Any arrangements for Early and After Care are made with the Site Director.**
- With enough interest for Friday After Care, we may offer After Care on Fridays until one hour

before Shababt.

- Due to the current situation with COVID-19, the Director has full discretion on the continuation of Early and After Care should any safety concerns arise.
- ***Please note that to best acclimate your children to school, we will not have Early or After Care the first week. You will be informed by the first day of school the date each site will be starting its Early and After Care.***

Application and Registration

In the early winter, applications for the upcoming school year are first made available to current Chai Tots families and then to the general public. There is a \$200 registration fee, to be paid upon submission of a registration application. Upon acceptance, a *\$1,500 non-refundable – non-transferable tuition deposit is required to secure a spot for your child.* If your \$1,500 tuition payment is not received, Chai Tots has the right to disregard your registration and assume that you have made other arrangements.

Chai Tots has three locations, we make every attempt to accept children to the site nearest to where they live.

Medical Records

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene requires Chai Tots to obtain medical forms along with current immunization records for every child. This form must be submitted before the child can begin attending school. Please be sure to submit this form, as there are no exceptions to this rule.

Tuition Payment

Two payment options are available:

- *Full cost of tuition paid prior to the first day of school via EZCare Parent Portal*
- *Three tuition payments. These payments will only be accepted via the EZCare Parent Portal (details in email with contract to set-up account)*

The first(or full) tuition payment plus the one time snack and supply fee, together with a signed tuition contract, must be submitted to the admissions office prior to attending school.

Security Fee 2021-2022

With the help of parents, Chai Tots has recently hired a security guard for our preschool sites. There is now an added fee of \$500.00 for each family for this service. This fee will go towards the cost of a rotating security guard for the preschool year of 2021-2022.

Refunds and Termination

Parents who choose to voluntarily withdraw their child during the school year, while school is still open and operating, must notify the school in writing and there will be no refunds on tuition.

A child's enrollment may be terminated by the school for non-payment of fees, or if the child has a medical or behavioral problem which exceeds Chai Tots' ability to maintain. Parents will be given two weeks notice and an explanation prior to the date of termination. If the school terminates a child's enrollment, a prorated refund of tuition will be made.

Temporary Closure

In the event that NYC Department of Health mandates a temporary closure of more than 10 school days, Chai Tots will refund you 75% of tuition fees, until the school reopens. This refund will start after 10 days of closure.

Permanent Closure

In the event that our school closes at any time during the year, for more than 10 school days, Chai Tots will refund 75% of the remaining tuition. Refunds will start the following week of school, not the day of closure.

Alternative Schooling

In the event that the NYC Department of Health closes preschools:

Toddler Class

This class will not be offered virtual schooling and tuition will be refunded 75% on the onset of any closure that is greater than 10 school days. If school reopens, tuition will go into effect on a prorated basis.

Jr. Nursery & Nursery Classes

In the event that the NYC Department of Health closes preschools, and with enough interest, Chai Tots will offer Virtual Preschool to our Junior Nursery and Nursery classes at a discounted tuition rate. For those that are not interested in virtual (discounted) school, there will be an option for a refund of 75% of the remaining tuition.

Pre-K Class

In the event that the NYC Department of Health or Department of Education decide to close Pre-K/Department of Education Programs our Pre-K class will be offered Virtual Preschool at no cost.

Curriculum

Our comprehensive and developmentally-appropriate program is designed to promote each child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth. All games and activities are skills-based and goal oriented, so that the children grow with everything they do.

The Chai Tots curriculum is based on age-appropriate and developmentally accepted practices. The

classroom set-up comprises learning centers, which include blocks, art, dramatic play, books, manipulatives and scientific discovery. These centers allow the children to have choices and to actively explore. They learn by interacting with their peers, teachers and with the various objects in their environment. Each center has a specific aim, and with the teacher's guidance they each help foster the children's cognitive, emotional and physical growth.

Planning for the classroom involves consideration to the age-appropriateness for the group and individual aptness for each child. Being cognizant that every child learns differently, we use various mediums to teach each lesson. Children's interests are explored through inquiry and research methods. Assessment is also an important part of the curriculum. A portfolio for each child contains developmental checklists, work samples and anecdotal records. We endeavor to make sure that children reach their individual potential.

We integrate an emergent curriculum approach into a thematic approach to create a synthesis of programs, including the best guided and individualized educational opportunities. The daily schedule is planned to include active and quiet times, gross and fine motor activities, and child-initiated as well as staff-initiated activities. Outdoor (weather permitting) and indoor play is scheduled each day.

Academic

We encourage the children to develop self-motivation; active investigational skills through questioning, exploring and observing, and the thinking and problem-solving abilities needed to thrive in a world of challenge and competition. Children are surrounded with books, literacy experiences and exposure to the alphabet to prepare them for pre-reading and reading that will follow.

Emotional

Children are encouraged to develop a positive self-concept, to understand the difference between right and wrong, and to develop a sense of responsibility. They are encouraged to recognize that people are different and to be accepting of others. We help them learn and practice appropriate ways to express their feelings and to respond to others constructively.

Social

We encourage each child to work and play with others, to develop communication skills, to respect the rights and privacy of their peers, and, most of all, to develop traits of kindness, courtesy, helpfulness and acceptance.

Physical

Children are provided constant opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills, to develop finger strength, dexterity, as well as arm-eye and body coordination.

Curriculum Highlights

Integrating Current Events and Jewish Pride

Lesson plans at Chai Tots are built around the events influencing the children at the time that they are

being taught. Weather changes, special animal habits, national celebrations and holiday seasons all determine what will be brought into the classroom at any particular time of year. All of these are laced into the general curriculum to allow the children to learn from what is going on around them.

During the season of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year, when it is traditional to dip an apple into honey and blow the shofar (a ram's horn), we take the opportunity to make the holiday a scientific experience. The children learn all about apples, honeybees and how they make honey, and about the different kinds of animals with antlers.

During Chanukah, when it is traditional to light a Menorah in the home, the children learn about fire safety, firefighters and how they help our communities. This pattern follows our curriculum throughout the year, and provides the children with insights and experiences that give them pride in their tradition.

Music and Movement

Music is the universal language in our classrooms. Our classrooms are equipped with musical instruments and opportunities for children to explore rhythm and song. Music and movement is an integral part of our curriculum and is built into our daily schedule. The children often participate in a parade using rhythm instruments as they march throughout the school. Musical techniques improve a child's dynamics, tempo, beat, and rhythm.

Physical Education

Through our physical education program, we aim to develop students' large motor skills, hand/eye coordination and eye/foot coordination. The PE sessions are action-packed with exciting skills to learn and movement routines that motivate and challenge the children. They learn rhythm, dance, stretching and aerobics. Several of the games we play involve working as a team.

Arts and Crafts

The children will have an opportunity to explore their creativity using a variety of art mediums. A variety of paints, markers, crayons, colored pencils, tape, glue, scissors, glitter and felt are just a few of the myriad of materials the children will use to create their pieces of art within the classroom. It is important to remember that it is the process, not the finished product, that matters most. We want your children to feel proud of their creations.

Hebrew Language

Our goal is to comfortably expose children to modern, oral Hebrew language. They will hear and learn Hebrew words relating to the seasons, Jewish holidays and units discussed in their classroom. Hebrew songs and games are incorporated into lessons. Students will also have hands-on experiences learning about Jewish values and the customs associated with Shabbat and the Jewish holidays.

Shabbat Parties

Every Friday the children have a beautiful Shabbat party. The children bake challah, dress up, drink grape juice, sing Shabbat songs, and enjoy some special treats provided by the school. Each week a child from the class will be chosen to be the "Shabbat *Ima* (mother)" or "Shabbat *Abba* (father)". If you

would like to enhance the party, cupcakes can be added by submitting \$6 to the school office. *In past years, the parents of our Shabbat Ima or Shabbat Abba, were invited to come and participate in the Shabbat Party, due to health and safety concerns, we are not able to do that during the 2021-2022 school year.*

Shabbat Kit

Each Friday, one child is given a Shabbat Kit to take home for the weekend. This kit contains a homemade challah, grape juice, *kiddush* cup, *kippah*, candlesticks, and a Shabbat story book. The kit is for your child to experience Shabbat together with you at home. The Shabbat kit also includes a journal, for you and your child to document your experience and capture your thoughts. This journal is later shared with the class.

Mitzvah Notes

Encouraging positive behavior is a key component in our daily schedule. We ask parents to please document and send in notes each day sharing a *mitzvah*, a good deed, or something extra special your child did. These notes are read during the day and displayed on a *mitzvah* tree for all to see.

Tzedaka (Charity)

One of the many beautiful mitzvahs of Judaism is charity. We encourage the children to bring a penny each day for our tzedakah box. The children enjoy this experience, and later in the year the class will decide where they would like to donate the charity they collected.

Policies and Procedures

Health Policies

New Ill-Child Policy

Chai Tots is dedicated to the well-being and health of our students and staff. For this reason, the ill-child policy will be much more stringent than in the past. For your child's protection as well as other children and our staff, if a child has any of the following symptoms, they must be kept home for at least 24 hours after the symptom/s have cleared:

- Dry or deep cough
- Fever & Chills (Temperature over 99.5°F)
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Loss of taste or smell
- Pink, weepy or matted eyes
- Green/yellow discharge from the nose
- Contagious disease, or within the first 24 hour period of taking antibiotics

Exceptions may be made for known and documented conditions that are clearly not Covid related.

Health Screening Policy

Students and staff will be screened every morning before entering the school building. Anyone with a cough, fever, chills, fatigue, shortness of breath, body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, loss of taste or smell, must be sent home or remain at home for at least 24 hours after the symptom/s have cleared.

Student Screening

Please do your own health screening at home before sending your child to school each day. Be sure they do not have any COVID-19 like symptoms or a fever, runny nose, cough, diarrhea, or any of the illnesses listed in the ill-child policy. Do not medicate your child before sending them to school.

If you notice any of these symptoms, it is best to keep your child home until the symptoms have subsided. If they show any symptoms during the school day and have a fever over 99.5, they will not be allowed to return to school without a doctor's note or a negative COVID-19 test.

As we experienced over the summer, it is quicker to wait at home until a common cold passes then it is to bring them to school and be sent home to wait for the COVID-19 results to come back.

Upon arrival, we will ask you basic questions about your child's and your family's health, take their temperature and check for any signs of illness. Anyone with a fever over 99.5°F will not be allowed into the school. You will need to wait while we screen your child. It will be done quickly and efficiently. Once deemed safe to enter the school, we will give you the "OK" to leave and your child will be escorted to class by one of our staff members.

Staff Screening

All permitted staff will be screened daily before entering the building. They will be asked the same basic questions about their health and their family's health and will have their temperature taken. Anyone with a fever over 99.5 will not be allowed into the school.

Becoming Ill While at School

If a child becomes symptomatic with respiratory issues such as cough, shortness of breath and/or has a fever during the school day, the student will be immediately brought to the office and isolated. A parent will be required to pick up the child within a reasonable amount of time. **They will not be admitted back at school until there is a lab/physician documentation of negative COVID-19 test results. OR a physician establishes an alternative diagnosis and they present a doctor's note that states they do not have COVID-19 and is able to return to school without placing others at risk.**

We reserve the right to decide if your child is demonstrating symptoms that require us to have the child return home. We also reserve the right to ask you to keep your child home if another child or family member in the house is ill.

Self Reporting

A system is in place to request all staff to regularly report any symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, sore throat, congestion, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of sense of smell/taste, or exposure to COVID-19. Staff with symptoms or exposure will be asked to refrain from returning to school and CDC and NYC Department of Health protocols will be followed prior to their returning to school.

Chai Tots students and families must also report any symptoms as well as any exposure to COVID-19.

Positive COVID Case with the School

If a positive COVID case is identified in school, Chai Tots will work with the local Department of Health (NYC DOH) and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding the need for initiating quarantines or temporary closure. Affected students or staff will be notified immediately if they have been in contact with a COVID-19 positive person. Due to Federal HIPAA laws, we are prevented from sharing the name(s) of any individual or family with a positive COVID-19 test.

Communicable Diseases

Parents **MUST** notify the school in case of any infectious or contagious disease, such as COVID-19, measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, strep throat, hand foot and mouth disease, pinworms, croup, pink eye, or the flu.

After an illness, a child must be symptom free for 24 hours after the symptoms subside, strong, and active before returning to school. Please remember that children tire more easily in group situations. Since teachers go outside with their classes, we cannot keep one child inside during outdoor play time.

Lice

Lice is a very common problem among school children. Aside from mild irritation and occasional head sores, it is not dangerous. However, it is highly contagious, and if it is not contained it will spread through the school over and over again. For this reason, children who have lice or nits are not permitted in school. A child who has lice can return to school only with a note from an expert lice remover, stating that the condition has been treated successfully.

Minor Injury

If your child receives a minor injury or bruise at school, appropriate first aid will be administered. You will receive an Ouch Report completed by the teacher indicating the details about the injury. When necessary, we will give you a call to update you on the situation.

Administration of Medication

According to the NYC Board of Health, Chai Tots Preschool may not administer medication. Any medication that needs to be given during the day must be administered by the parent or authorized adult of the parent's choice.

Sanitizing and Cleaning Policy

We will continue to implement a high standard of sanitizing & cleaning. The maintenance and cleaning policies have been updated to include vigorous disinfection on a routine basis. Chai Tots is updating and will continue to maintain updated air filtration systems throughout the year.

A daily cleaning schedule for toys and utensils will be in place for each classroom. Toys will be rotated throughout the week to accommodate a reasonable system of the daily sanitizing of the toys. **Children cannot bring toys from home.**

Individual supply kits will be made per child to limit the sharing of personal items such as pencils, markers, scissors, etc. Each family will be asked to supply disinfectant wipes as part of the yearly supply list.

If your child remains at school for a nap, all pillows and blankets will remain at school in a large bag (provided by you) and will be sent home at the end of each week to be washed and returned the following week.

Hand Washing

Additional handwashing (for a minimum of 20 seconds) has been added to the class routine. We have also installed hand sanitizing stations to be used at the entrance of each classroom as well as inside each classroom.

Facial Covering and Masks

All staff members will be required to wear a face mask. Children over the age of 3 may wear face coverings within the facility. The New York Department of Health is not mandating that children wear masks. If you choose to send your child with a face mask you must provide a clean/new mask every day. We reserve the right to remove a child's mask when deemed unsafe or being used inappropriately

Arrival & Dismissal

At our Park Slope Site, to ensure a safe and organized drop-off and pick-up, each class/pod will have a separate entrance/exit. You must follow the designated entrance and exit for your child and their class/pod.

Arrival

Only students and staff will be permitted to enter the school building. Students will be escorted in and out of the building by Chai Tots staff. Parents/caregivers must remain outside the school yard until it is their turn to be screened. All parents/caregivers must wear a mask while outside during drop-off, pick-up and the daily health screenings. Parents/caregivers will not be permitted to hangout in or around the school yard before or after school.

The time before class begins is a necessary preparation time for the teacher. When the screenings

begin at 9:00 am, teachers must be completely ready and involved with the children. With the exception of an emergency, all lengthy conversations with teachers must be reserved for *after* school hours.

Unless Early Care drop-off has been prearranged with the Site Director (as explained above), children may not be brought to school early. If you arrive before 9:00 am, please respect the teachers and school policy, and remain with your child outside the gates until the health screenings begin.

Dismissal

Dismissal is at 3:00 pm (*with the exception of Fridays after daylight savings, when dismissal will be at 2:00 pm until daylight savings begins in 2022*). Please be punctual.

Absences

Regular attendance is crucial for your child's development. We strongly encourage parents to ensure that their child arrives on time and is absent only if they are ill. It is the parent's responsibility to determine if their child is not feeling well enough to come to school. (Please see our Healthy Policies above.)

Holidays and Family Vacations

Every child is enrolled for the entire school year. Since most of the school's costs are fixed and do not vary according to daily attendance, the school cannot issue refunds or credits for illness, holidays or family vacations. Make-up days are not available. In the event of a planned absence, please inform the teacher prior to the absence.

Discipline

Children want to behave. If they are not behaving as they should, it is the job of the adult to figure out what is stopping the child from behaving properly. Often, if they are physically cared for, perhaps with a drink, some food or sleep, they will return to their usual selves. Children do not always have the necessary verbal skills to express their feelings, such as anger, frustration, sadness, hurt or fear. These emotions can sometimes be expressed through aggressive behavior or compulsivity, such as hitting and pushing. As a child ages, with the help and guidance he/she will learn to replace aggressive behavior with appropriate verbal responses.

Our goal is to teach children to be patient and empathetic, and to give them the tools to be able to express themselves and work out any issues. When problems arise, they are viewed as opportunities to teach valuable skills, such as problem solving, conflict resolution, as well as cause and effect. Teachers model appropriate ways to resolve issues and encourage children to participate in the process.

When mistakes occur, teachers use clear cause and effect consequences. For example, a child who dumps crayons on the floor will be asked to pick them up. The goal is to help children develop self-control, to think about what result their action might cause, and to take the necessary steps to correct their mistakes. This process will encourage the child to make the right choices. If a child is upset, the teacher will first try to calm them down and then, together, they will problem solve and discuss the situation.

For a child who might not cooperate in a group listening situation, the child will be reminded by the teacher of acceptable behavior. A break from the group for some personal time to think is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates inappropriate behavior. This time to think is not a punishment, but rather an opportunity for the child to calm down, and decide for themselves when they are ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior.

Toys such as play guns, swords, and others that encourage aggressive behavior are not allowed in the school. *Chai Tots Preschool enforces a no-tolerance-policy for bullying.*

Our efforts are most productive with support from the parents and home atmosphere. If behavior problems persist, the parents may be asked to join for a conference to discuss what may be helpful in motivating or encouraging the child. It may be suggested that the child be involved in a behavior modification program, which gives the parents the option of being involved in the process.

Bathroom Use

Learning to use the toilet is a big event in a young child's life. Because toilet training is a complex process, there are many issues caregivers and families must consider before and during the process of toilet training so that it can be a successful and positive experience for everyone.

Signs of Child Readiness

- The child follows simple directions
- Remains dry for at least 2 hours at a time during the day
- Has 3 consistent dry days
- Dry after nap time
- Regular and predictable bowel movements (Some children may have bowel movements every day and some may have to go only once in 2-3 days)
- Walks to and from the bathroom, pulls down their own pants and pulls them up again
- Seems uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers
- Seems interested in the toilet
- Has asked to wear big-kid underwear

If a child displays most of these signs, then they are probably ready to start toilet training. If they do not have most of these skills, or have a negative reaction to toilet training, wait a few weeks until most of the skills are apparent. Starting too soon can actually delay the process and cause tears and frustration. Toilet training is much easier when the child is ready.

We require that the child verbally be able to express their needs to go to the bathroom, as well as having a minimum of two consecutive dry days in underwear. The classrooms are equipped with sinks and toilets at child-friendly heights.

Children in our toddler and 2's classes do not need to be toilet trained. Parents supply diapers and wipes; you will be notified when your supply is running low. It is your responsibility to make sure your child always has a spare set of clothes. If a child has an accident, they will be changed and any soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. If there is no clothing available, a parent will be asked to bring clothing to school.

Clothing

Children should come dressed for active play and learning. It is best to wear casual, washable clothes and sturdy, rubber-soled shoes (flip-flops and crocs are not safe for active play). As the children participate in daily art activities they may get paint on their clothing, despite wearing protective smocks. For this reason, we ask parents to please send children to school in inexpensive play clothes. Please make sure your child's clothing can be easily managed during toileting.

Snack and Lunch

Snacks will be provided by the school, mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Nutritious lunches are important for efficient body functioning. Please try to send healthy choices with your child. We welcome all dairy and *pareve* lunches. Meat lunches should not be sent to school, as the school follows kosher dietary laws. If there is a student in your child's class who is allergic to a particular food, the teacher will ask you not to send it in. This rule is for the health and wellbeing of all children and will be enforced.

Birthdays

If you'd like your child to celebrate their birthday with a party in Chai Tots, we require that the school create the party, to ensure that all birthdays are celebrated in an equal fashion. This requires a week advance notice and a fee of \$35. The teacher will make all necessary arrangements and organize a cake, birthday hat, class card, and a birthday present for your child. No outside food, birthday bags, party favors, etc. will be permitted under any circumstances. No exceptions will be made.

If you'd rather have a private birthday party outside of school with your child's Chai Tots friends, please be sensitive to the children whose families observe kosher dietary laws. Feel free to call the school for guidance with kosher food purchases. Additionally, it is advisable not to schedule a private party on a Saturday to avoid potential issues for Shabbat-observing classmates.

Donations and Fundraisers

We try to keep fundraising to a minimum. At Chanukah time, parents typically utilize the opportunity to give presents to their child's classroom. At Purim, parents have the opportunity to give mishloach manot (gift baskets of food) to the children and members of the school. There is typically one major annual fundraising evening; however, we do not anticipate being able to host one during the 2020-2021 school year.

Communication

An open line of communication between the school and parents is very important. We are interested in your child's development and are always willing to work with you to enhance your child's school experience. Any questions about our program can be addressed to your Site Director or to Sarah Hecht, the Director of Chai Tots, who can be reached at Director@ChaiTotsPreschool.com.

Contacting Teachers

If you feel the need to talk to your child's teacher at any time, you can email them at their email address that will be provided to you no later than the first day of school. Please allow 24 hours for a response. If you have an urgent matter, please contact the school by phone and leave a message. They will contact you at their earliest convenience.

Changes in Home Environment

To help us give your child the most successful experience we can, we request that you inform us of any changes in your family life. Often, changes that are not hard for an adult to adapt to are more difficult for a child. Please let us know if there is a change in your contact information, including phone numbers, addresses, and emails.

Home Visits/Phasing-In

In order to provide a comfortable start for the first day of school, your child's teacher typically would contact you to schedule a home visit so they could meet you and your child at home. However, due to health and safety concerns, this year we are having a Phasing-In period for each class and student. Each child's personal phasing-in will be a great opportunity for your child and teacher to get to know each other before the first day of school.

Blog/Newsletter

Each week your child's teacher will publish a newsletter, complete with pictures, informing you about your child's curriculum and classroom activities. Please check for important notices and upcoming events which may be included in the newsletter.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences take place twice a year. Typically the conferences are held in the evenings at school, this year, they will be held in the evening over Zoom. These conferences, which both parents are encouraged to attend, are an opportunity to discuss the uniqueness of your child and to receive an in-depth view of your child's development and progress at school.

How to Get Involved

Class Parents

Chai Tots Preschool welcomes active parental involvement in the school. Each class has a Class Parent who helps coordinate class initiatives. It has become customary for Class Parents to coordinate a teacher's gift for Chanukah and at the end of the school year. Typically the class parents could help schedule after school events for the other parents in their child's class, volunteer with the Scholastic

Book Fair, or assist in facilitating the common desire to help enhance their child's classroom. Again, due to health and safety concerns, we do not anticipate hosting any events that require gathering in-person. Please let your teacher know if you are interested in being a class parent.

Events

These are events that we typically host throughout the school year. At the moment, due to health and safety concerns, we do not anticipate being able to host them during the 2021-2022 school year.

Getting to Know You - Friday Night Family Shabbat Dinner

Join together and get to know other Chai Tots families. Celebrate Shabbat with a three-course meal and watch your child perform his/her favorite Shabbat songs. This Shabbat dinner is usually held during November. More information will be emailed and sent home with your child.

Model Seder

Before Passover, the children eagerly prepare for the Seder by practicing hands-on activities, such as squeezing the grapes to make grape juice, grinding the maro, and cooking the potatoes. They experience the story of Passover, the preparation and lead up steps to conducting a Seder, and then together with all the classes, Passover is celebrated with a model Seder.

Birthday Parties

As stated above, we will gladly celebrate and throw in-class birthday parties for our Chai Tots friends. We love inviting parents or family members to attend these parties. However, this year, only class members and their teachers will be permitted to celebrate the in-class birthday parties.

Shabbat Parties

We love having the families of our Shabbat Ima and Shabbat Abba to join in our Shabbat Parties. Unfortunately, this will have to be put on hold for this year as no outside visitors will be permitted to celebrate with us during our Shabbat Parties.

Emergency Information

All parents are required to fill in and submit an emergency information card for each child. Please make sure the information remains up-to-date. In case of a family emergency, please contact your Site Director or the Director, Sarah Hecht at (718)499-0836.

Medical Emergency

In case of serious illness, accident or injury, a parent will be notified immediately. If we cannot reach

you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call Hatzalah. Until your arrival, the director or teacher will make all decisions about your child's care, under the advice of your child's physician or the paramedics. Resultant costs not covered by the school's insurance policy will be your responsibility.

Emergency School Closures

Severe Weather

As with most city schools, Chai Tots remains open through the winter except for the most severe weather conditions. School closings due to extreme weather will usually be decided based on the public schools in the area. In the event that school needs to be cancelled due to inclement weather, an email will be sent to you by 7:30 am.



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