

The Toronto
Heschel School



בית הספר
על שם השל

Inspiring Jewish Students to Make a Difference

PARENT HANDBOOK 2017 - 2018

מדריך להורים
תשע"ז - תשע"ח

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I. WELCOME

Welcome to the Toronto Heschel School. Our school combines a deep love for Jewish learning with the highest academic standards within an inclusive, pluralistic community. Our unique integrated curriculum is based on research and on-going development of the best educational practices. Our way of teaching is designed to nurture the habits of heart, soul, body and mind that enable children to flourish academically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Our team of passionate, highly qualified teachers attend to each child's holistic learning experience. Together with our teachers, our families are our most valued partners in achieving the best education for children.

Rabbi A.J. Heschel famously wrote that, "Wonder, not doubt, is the beginning of knowledge." We are so glad that you and your children have chosen to join us in the journey of wonder here at The Toronto Heschel School.

II. MISSION excerpt from By-Law 2, adopted September 2014

The Corporation will operate the School as a Jewish day school and will hold to the following principles:

The School is, and will remain, an interdenominational, religious Jewish day school which integrates the teaching of Judaism with a general studies curriculum. The mandate of the School is to draw its students from a wide range of Jewish observance. The School supports Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's concern for the spiritual quality of human relations and his promotion of unity of the Jewish people. The School's philosophy is based on religious pluralism, understanding and mutual respect.

The School welcomes students from the full spectrum of Jewish experience and provides a curriculum and school community for children from the entire Jewish community. The School respects each family's choices regarding Jewish religious observance in the home.

In School, the children learn the spiritual, religious and ethical precepts of Judaism on an egalitarian basis. All School and School-related events must follow traditional Jewish practice, including the laws of Shabbat, Kashrut and Holiday observance. All religious services offered by the School shall be conducted in the spirit of egalitarianism, except that the School may provide non-egalitarian religious services in addition to egalitarian services.

Following the teachings of Rabbi Heschel, students learn how to find religious significance in every phenomenon of nature, how to worship God by respecting and caring for each other, and how to pray in a manner that expresses their yearnings for admiration, thanksgiving and trust in God. The School maintains a very strong fully integrated environmental ethos.

The School pursues an original educational programme of teaching for understanding, amalgamating "Accelerated" and "Integrative" learning. Individual teachers serve as role models of cultural integration. The programme satisfies the curricular guidelines of the Ontario Ministry of Education. A low teacher-student ratio, with small group learning, is maintained in all classes.

The theory of multiple intelligences, which guides one to use all the senses in the learning process and the multi-sensory mode of education are inherent and salient in the School programme. The School's educational philosophy accepts that children have different learning styles and that human intelligence is expressed in multiple manifestations, including mathematical, logical, artistic, and other forms. The School's teaching methodology is consistent with this philosophy of activating all the senses, which keeps it beyond the linguistic-analytical reach of the traditional mode of education.

The School fully integrates the multiple aspects of human intelligence with the teachings of Judaism. Drawing on the words of Rabbi Heschel, students learn that doing "mitzvot" begins with small acts of kindness to each other, with mutual concern and consideration. There is a "Toronto Heschel" way of acting and behaving in the School that begins with administration and staff and is emulated by students and their parents. To describe this behaviour, the School uses the Hebrew term "Derekh Eretz".

The School's main academic goal is to guide its students to strive for excellence and to be successful learners in every situation and environment. There is strong emphasis on problem-solving skills, oral and written communication and science accompanied by ethical deliberations.

The School utilizes the Arts in all aspects of the curriculum to enhance creativity, abstract thinking and non-verbal communication, and to develop aesthetic appreciation.

The School hires teachers based on their perceived ability to teach the School's curriculum in accordance with the Mission.

The School is a community school. Personal responsibility for the Jewish community infiltrates the education of each student. The School integrates the daily life of its students with community service and civic participation. The School maintains that a committed Jew is a good citizen of the world who strives towards the ethical fulfillment of all peoples.

The School offers educational programmes to parents, prospective parents and to the community at large to further understand the School's educational philosophy and of the ideas of Rabbi Heschel which inspired the School's foundation and continue to inform of its work.

III. INTRODUCING ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

The Toronto Heschel School draws deeply on the well of inspiration offered by our namesake, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel. The following quotes reflect Heschel's vision of holiness, learning, the role of parents and teachers, and our relationship with the earth. These quotes are adapted from "I Asked for Wonder," A Spiritual Anthology of Abraham Joshua Heschel, edited by Samuel H. Dresner, The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 1996.

THE PARENT

The Heart of the Ten Commandments is to be found in the words: Revere thy father and thy mother.

The problem I as a father face is why my child should revere me.

Unless my child will sense in my personal existence acts and attitudes that evoke reverence - the ability to delay satisfactions, to overcome prejudices, to sense the holy, and to strive for the noble - why should he/she revere me?

THE TEACHER

Everything depends on the person who stands in the front of the classroom. The teacher is not an automatic fountain from which intellectual beverages may be obtained. The teacher is either a witness or a stranger. To guide the pupil into the Promised Land, he or she must have been there... When asking oneself: Do I stand for what I teach? Do I believe what I say? The teacher must be able to answer in the affirmative.

What we need more than anything else is not textbooks but text-people. It is the personality of the teacher which is the text that the pupils read; the text that they will never forget.

HOLINESS

It is not said: "Ye shall be full of awe for I am holy," but "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2).

How does a human being, "dust and ashes," turn holy? Through doing God's mitzvot, God's commandments.

A man to be holy must fear his mother and father, keep the Shabbat, not turn to idols...nor deal falsely nor lie to one another...not curse the deaf nor put a stumbling-block before the blind...not be guilty of any injustice...not be a tale-bearer...not stand idly by the blood of his neighbour...not hate...not take vengeance nor bear any grudge...but "love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus 19:3-18).

We live by the conviction that acts of goodness reflect the hidden light of God's holiness. God's light is above our minds but not beyond our will. It is within our power to mirror God's unending love in deeds of kindness, like brooks that hold the sky.

LEARNING

Wonder rather than doubt is the root of knowledge.

Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement.get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed.

The role of learning is decisive. Learning being a source of inspiration, learning being the greatest adventure, learning being a source of joy, and, in fact, learning for the purpose of discovering, of the importance of self-discipline.

And above all, remember that the meaning of life is to live life as if it were a work of art.

THE EARTH

"To the Greeks as to many other peoples, the earth is generally known as Mother Earth. She is the mother who sends up fruits, the gift of children, and to her men return at death. Greek poetry and drama exalt the divinity of the earth and according to Plutarch, "The name of Ge, dear and precious to every Hellene, and it is our tradition to honor her like any other god." The adoration of the beauty and abundance of the earth in Greek literature is tinged with a sense of gratefulness to the earth for her gifts to man. Such a concept is alien to the Biblical man. He recognizes: only One parent: God. The earth is his sister rather than his mother. Man and earth are equally the creation of God."

IV. AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR TEACHING METHODOLOGY

In order that our way of teaching be fully appreciated, we offer some definitions and interpretations of key terms and phrases which form the basis of the educational philosophy of The Toronto Heschel School.

The following teaching practices support the educational vision of the Toronto Heschel School, and form the basis of the teaching methods we use across the curriculum.

1. *Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines*

Each discipline (subject area) is taught using methods that encourage the 'ways of thinking' which are natural and inherent to that discipline. For example, learning in science focuses on the Scientific Method and the use of inquiry and experimentation; Mathematics focuses on logical reasoning; Hebrew language instruction focuses on oral immersion, as well as the unique root structure of Hebrew; Tanakh instruction nurtures students' abilities to interpret text in multiple ways; Gemara focuses on the development of logical reasoning.

2. *Interdisciplinary / Integrated Teaching and Learning*

Along with strong skills in each discipline, we aim to develop in our students a holistic, interdisciplinary view of the world. By integrating Jewish and general (secular) studies, we help students appreciate how Judaism endows us with unique and powerful approaches for learning, inquiry and reasoning that can be applied broadly. We provide students with a Jewish lens through which to understand a broad range of ethical and social issues. Through these methods students develop a sense of Jewish identity grounded not only in Jewish content but in Jewish ways of learning and thinking about the world.

3. *Big Ideas Curriculum (Generative Topics)*

Topics of study, whether disciplinary or inter-disciplinary, are organized around 'Big Ideas' or Generative Topics. A Generative Topic is a conceptual theme or idea that is broad in scope; A good Generative Topic is one that generates and maintains student interest, raises important questions, and often is relevant to more than one discipline. Ideally, Generative Topics will be based on a rich Judaic concept. Examples of quintessential Generative Topics in The Toronto Heschel School curriculum are מעבדות להירות (From Slavery to Freedom, grade 5), חכם לב-גודל לב (The wise heart and the generous heart, grade 1), and כל חיה לפי מינה (Each animal according to its kind, grade 2).

4. *Nurturing Habits of Heart and Mind*

Along with skills, methods, and content in each discipline, we aim to nurture in our students positive dispositions for thinking, working, and inter-personal and intra-personal development. The notion of such dispositions is based on the work of Kallick and Costa, whose list of 16 Habits of Mind include dispositions of curiosity, risk-taking, perseverance, posing questions, and finding humour. We expand beyond their initial list to include Habits of Heart and Mind that emerge from the Jewish tradition.

5. *Teaching and Learning for Understanding*

We teach for deep understanding in all disciplines of the curriculum. Teaching for understanding requires that students demonstrate not merely procedural proficiency (e.g. being able to answer that $5 \times 7 = 35$) but conceptual understanding (e.g. being able to demonstrate 'how' or 'why' $5 \times 7 = 35$). Learning for understanding can be demonstrated through application of learned knowledge and skills to new contexts, reconfiguration of knowledge in different modalities (e.g. transferring knowledge from written form to artistic form), the ability to explain or represent knowledge in different ways and diverse strategies, and project based learning.

6. *Teaching through the arts*

We employ the diverse arts as methods for teaching in all areas of the curriculum. The arts are effective tools for learning of basic facts, thinking skills, and complex ideas. Teaching through the arts has been shown to

invigorate student engagement and connection to material. Learning Jewish texts and concepts through the arts creates a deep, embodied connection to the material. Moreover, learning through the arts has been shown to enhance abilities such as lateral thinking, organizational skills, and long-term planning.

7. *Experiential, Inquiry-Based Learning*

Classroom lessons are structured around inquiry-based learning activities, in which students are actively engaged in generating meaning and knowledge, rather than being passive recipients of the teacher's instruction. Inquiry and experiential learning is enhanced by the use of the arts (see above), small group and Chaveruta based learning, and project based learning.

8. *Multi-Sensory Learning:*

This is an instructional approach that uses many of the senses when teaching or learning a subject. It provides students with the opportunity of taking in and expressing learning using various modalities, i.e. auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, etc. We draw on Howard Gardner's theory of "Multiple Intelligences", suggesting that individuals perceive the world in at least nine different and equally important ways, and that educational programmes should foster the development of all these forms of thinking.

9. *Attention to the Diverse Learning Styles and Needs of Each Child*

Learning and assessment activities are structured with attention to the diverse learning styles and needs of each child. This requires differentiated instruction, the use of multi-sensory instructional tools, and individual (along with group) assessment.

10. *Nurturing Ethical Conscience through a Jewish Framework*

We teach values of democratic, responsible, and ethical citizenship through Jewish sources, ideas, and practices. The Chumash Theme curriculum, the Grade 8 Talmud/Human Rights unit, and the school-wide Middah program are examples of explicit practices that teach ethics through a Jewish framework. Throughout the curriculum attention is given to nurturing ecological awareness and environmental responsibility from a Jewish perspective. The 'Heschel Classroom', the daily toranut program, integrated outdoor learning activities are all examples of learning activities that support this goal.

11. *Jewishly Inspired Environmental Education*

This award-winning curriculum is unique to The Toronto Heschel School. Students learn to respect and protect the environment through this innovative environmental studies programme. Students participate in composting, recycling and renewal activities, which include tending to our teaching garden and participating in outdoor classrooms and hands-on nature and science lessons. The Toronto Heschel School has been recognized for its commitment to the environment through its designation as an 'Ontario Certified Eco-School – Gold Status.'

- *Teacher Qualifications:* Each homeroom teacher in the elementary school works jointly in general and Judaic studies. In addition to their professional qualifications, teachers have skills and talents in either drama, music, dance or visual arts. Teachers in the junior high have skills in particular subjects and also work in an interdisciplinary manner.
- *Professional Development:* Students learn best when their teachers are also active learners. Therefore, teachers and administrators at The Toronto Heschel School attend an annual summer workshop and ongoing professional development through professional organisations. They also take courses and seminars throughout North America and Israel. This helps our teachers stay current with the best practices in their profession.

V. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Based on the Ontario Schools Code of Conduct, September, 2001

- A. The Head of School and Senior Leadership Team takes a leadership role in the daily operation of a school by
1. Demonstrating care and commitment to academic excellence and a safe teaching and learning environment;
 2. Holding everyone under their authority accountable for their behaviour and actions;
 3. Communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of the school community.

- B. Teachers and School Staff, under the leadership of the principal, maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, staff uphold these high standards when they:
1. Help students work to their full potential and develop their self-worth;
 2. Communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
 3. Maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
 4. Demonstrate respect for all students, staff and parents;
 5. Prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.
- C. Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:
1. Comes to school prepared, on time and ready to learn;
 2. Shows respect for themselves, for others and for those in authority;
 3. Refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
 4. Follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own action.
- D. Parents play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill this responsibility when they:
1. Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
 2. Communicate regularly with the school;
 3. Help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
 4. Ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
 5. Promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
 6. Become familiar with the Code of Conduct and school rules;
 7. Encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
 8. Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues.

VI. SCHOOL STRUCTURE

THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The administrative structure of the school reflects the mission and goals that we continually strive to achieve. We are committed to ensuring that the administrative team is organized in such a way to positively empower the members of school community. The organization structure below provides a clear outline of the structure of the administrative team, followed with a brief description of overall functional responsibilities.

HEAD OF SCHOOL/DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Greg Beiles, *Head of School*, is responsible for maintaining the vision and goals of the school. He works with all of the stakeholders to ensure that the mission of the school is transmitted through the curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities of the school. He holds ultimate responsibility for all staffing decisions and student admissions. As Head of School, Greg works closely with the Board to maintain fiscal viability.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM (in alphabetical order)

Mark Abramsohn, *Director Business Operations / Acting Executive Director* is responsible for the efficient and effective management of the organization's non-educational daily, monthly and annual financial affairs, as well as the management of the physical facility. In addition Mark also manages all affairs related to the Board of Directors.

Heidi Friedman, *Director of the Early Years and Child Study*.

As Director of The Early Years, Heidi is responsible for the daily running of Junior and Senior Kindergarten, including pedagogy, student achievement, faculty support, supervision and evaluation and curriculum development and implementation in conjunction with the Head of School/Director of Education and The Learning Centre.

As Director of Child Study, Heidi is responsible for working with teachers to provide mentorship on meeting the needs of students with unique learning needs. She will observe students, mentor teachers, and provide direct guidance on accommodations where appropriate.

Malka Regan, *Director of the Elementary School*, is responsible for the daily running of grades 1-5 including pedagogy, student achievement, faculty support, supervision and evaluation and curriculum development and implementation in conjunction with the Head of School/Director of Education and The Learning Centre.

Edna Sharet, *Director of the Junior High*, is responsible for the daily running of grades 6-8 including pedagogy, student achievement, faculty support, supervision and evaluation and curriculum development and implementation in conjunction with the Head of School/Director of Education and The Learning Centre.

LEARNING CENTRE

The purpose of the Learning Centre is to support and mentor teachers in the development and implementation of teaching programs and practices that are consistent with the educational philosophy of the school. Learning Centre members assist teachers in differentiating teaching methods to meet the needs of all students. Members also help communicate methodologies and programs to parents and the wider community.

Members of the Learning Centre and Portfolios for 2017-2018 (alphabetical order):

Daniel Abramson	Environmental Sciences
Andrea Turner-Sack	Grade 3-8 Child Study
Greg Beiles	Elementary and Junior High Judaics
Lesley Cohen	Junior High Literacy and Civilizations
Heidi Friedman	Early Years Literacy and Integrated Curriculum, Grade KJ-2 Child Study
Judith Leitner	Integrated Arts
Shachar Leven	Elementary and Junior High Hebrew
Talya Metz	Early Years Math and Integrated Curriculum
Malka Regan	Elementary Literacy, Math, and Integrated Curriculum
Edna Sharet	Hebrew and Junior High Integrated Curriculum
Rachely Tal	Early Years and Primary Hebrew and Judaics
Marissa Unruh	Elementary and Junior High Math

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF (in alphabetical order)

Lea Amouyal	Receptionist
Greg Austin	Facilities Coordinator
Nathalie Dilouya Ben-Shabbat	Student Services Coordinator
Lisa Richler	Director of Admissions, Marketing and Community Development
Rachel Rosemarin	Accounting Department Coordinator
Andrea Turner-Sack	Grade 3-8 Child Study
Jaimie Carson	Marketing and Communications
Marlene Axmith	Development Coordinator

VII. GOVERNANCE

The Toronto Heschel School is part of a federally incorporated not-for-profit corporation known as Gesher Abraham. As such, it is permitted to issue receipts for tax deductible charitable donations under Canadian law. Tax receipts are issued for the amount of

tuition paid that is calculated towards the non-secular portion of education, based on CRA guidelines. Over the past few years, the amount of the donation receipt for a full tuition payment was between 80%-95% of tuition paid. The after tax cost of tuition for most families was therefore approximately 60% of tuition paid.

The school is governed by a Board of Directors, whose authority and responsibilities are defined in the organization's By-Law No. 2. Board members recognize and respect the principles and practices of the Corporation as set out in the Mission and will undertake to use their best efforts at all times, and to exercise their voting rights as Directors to support and maintain the character and purpose of the School as described in the Mission. In addition to the Board of Directors, the by-laws recognize the "Voting Members", whose mission is to safeguard the ideological and educational standards of the school. Voting Members as of June 15, 2016 are Gail Baker, Greg Beiles, Russell Goldman, Eileen Jadd, Ellen Kessler, Ken Kraft, Judith Leitner, Graeme Mawson, David Newman, Joanna Shapiro, Edna Sharet, Pamela Medjuck Stein, and Rachel Turkienicz.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS as of July, 2015:

Robert Closner	Mintz, Gaela
Jasmine Eliav	Joanna Shapiro, <i>Co-Chair</i>
Cheri Glina	Michelle Shulman, <i>Co-Chair</i>
Merle Goldman, <i>Community Director</i>	Michael Stein, <i>Community Director</i>
Jonathan Lebi	Jeff Weissberger
Arielle Mayer	Simon Wolle
Shirley Mayer	David Zbar
Jordana Mednick	

COMMITTEES

A complete list of committees and sub-committees, together with the Chair/Convenor, can be found in the 'Volunteer Book' which is published separately.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Our overriding policy is to avoid any actual or ostensible conflict of interest at all levels and at all times. Therefore, the following scenarios are illustrative but not exhaustive:

1. Any school parent who is also a member of the Board of Directors, a Voting Member or an Officer of the school will be excused from all Committee or Board discussions on issues in which their child is directly or individually involved. The parent will be excused as soon as such an issue has been raised from the agenda, but may submit a written statement to the Board on the issue.
2. Any Board member, Voting Member or Officer of the school will be excused from Board deliberations when an issue is raised concerning any member of his or her family, but may submit a written statement to the Board on the issue.
3. Staff members will not participate in any deliberations of the Board or any Committee once an issue relating to their salary, evaluation or a disciplinary matter has been raised but may submit a written statement to the Board on the issue.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is welcomed through three main channels.

1. Volunteering in the school. Bring special talents or a pair of hands to enrich the relationship with the school and provide much needed assistance. Please speak to the classroom teacher in advance to coordinate the time and nature of this involvement in advance.
2. Membership on Committees. There is always a need for parents to actively serve on the committees that deal with organizing school events, fundraising, and acquisition of equipment and materials. Please speak to one of the Co-Chairs of the Board or the Chair of the committee that is of interest to you.
3. Membership on the Board of Directors as outlined above.

CLASS PARENTS

Class parents are an important link between home and The Toronto Heschel School. At the beginning of the school term, two people from each class from grades JK- 5 and one person from each class in grades 6 – 8 are chosen for this task from among those who volunteer.

At times throughout the year, the school needs the involvement and assistance of parents. Class Parents are the ones charged with the responsibility of recruiting other parents for the necessary tasks. Help might be needed for classroom-specific activities such as art projects or preparations for a special ceremony or event. Volunteers are also needed for projects that affect the entire school such as fundraising or school-wide celebrations.

At The Toronto Heschel School, good communication between parents and staff is very important. With that in mind, Class Parents are sometimes the conduits by which information such as an upcoming adult education programme or regarding a life cycle event within the school community is disseminated to other parents.

PARENT EDUCATION

The Adult Education Committee offer opportunities for parents and Heschel community members to engage in on-going learning. Lectures and seminars cover topics including Jewish Thought, Weekly Torah study, Jewish and general education, parent and child relationships, and the teachings of Rabbi A.J. Heschel.

The Chevrah Committee also hosts educational and social events to strengthen the bonds among parents and between parents and staff. We encourage parents to participate and enhance their own education in these important areas.

VIII. ADMISSION TO THE TORONTO HESCHEL SCHOOL

The school admits a broad range of students. Through our admission process, we liaise closely with prospective students and their parents and endeavour to admit students based on such factors as the best interests of the prospective student and his/her family, and the School's guiding principles. Priority is given to applications for siblings and children of staff provided that applications for such children are received 18 months prior to the beginning of the school year of entry and our admission requirements have been satisfied. Prospective students for all grades are required to spend a minimum of one day in our classrooms. Parents are required to submit their children's report cards from prior schools. In unusual circumstances, other arrangements may be made with the family when a visit to the classroom is not possible. Students entering grade 2-8 may also be requested to provide a psycho-educational assessment as part of the admissions process.

PAYMENT POLICY

Payments to The Toronto Heschel School can be made by cheque (made payable to "The Toronto Heschel School"), pre-authorized payments or Credit Card (2% administration charge applicable). Tuition payments are processed based on a 12 month schedule from September to August. Any deviation from the tuition payment schedule must be approved, in writing, by the Treasurer of The Toronto Heschel School or designate. Some existing families may be on a May to April payment plan. Those families will continue in this format of payment.

RETURNED PAYMENT POLICY

There is a \$30.00 service charge for all returned pre-authorized payments and any NSF cheques. Those families enrolled in a pre-authorized payment plan must notify the Accounting office in advance of any changes to bank account information.

The School reserves the right to withhold admission to class and/or report cards when financial accounts are not current or when proper payment arrangements have not been made.

REFUND POLICY

The school refund policy is as follows:

- Deposits
All deposits will be credited to the student's tuition account. All deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable unless the student is not accepted to the school.

- **Withdrawal Prior to Commencement of the School Year**
Should a parent withdraw their child from the school prior to the commencement of the school year, all payments received by the school up to that point in time are non-refundable.
- **Mid-Year Withdrawal**
Enrollment at the school is for the full academic year unless otherwise specified in writing in advance of the commencement of the school year. A fee agreement must be signed by the parents, confirming enrollment and payment for the entire year. Families receiving a subsidy may have more than one agreement covering the tuition payment. In case of mid-year withdrawal of a student by the parent, the parent may apply in writing to the Treasurer or designate to waive the remaining unpaid tuition for the year, stating the intended date and reasons for withdrawal. The Treasurer or designate will deal with such applications on a case by case basis.
- **Other Situations**
The Treasurer with the assistance of the Board of Directors may deal with all extraordinary situations not covered in this policy on a case by case basis. The decision of the Treasurer shall be final.

IX. RELIGIOUS POLICIES AND PRACTICES

At the Toronto Heschel School, the children learn the spiritual, religious and ethical precepts of Judaism on an egalitarian basis. All School and School-related events follow traditional Jewish practice, including the laws of Shabbat, Kashrut and Holiday observance. All religious services offered by the School shall be conducted in the spirit of egalitarianism, except that the School may provide non-egalitarian religious services in addition to egalitarian services. As a bridge between various Jewish observances, The Toronto Heschel School seeks common ground in its religious expression.

KASHRUT

The school abides by the laws of kashrut. All school functions must be strictly kosher. Food brought to school or school-related events must be milk-based or pareve and catered by or purchased from a business with recognized kashrut agency supervision. Lunches brought to school must be pareve or dairy and should be kosher. In order that all children feel comfortable at all times, we respectfully request that parents be sensitive to dietary needs at private celebrations, e.g., birthday parties and Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations.

A full discussion of this policy is currently being updated and will be posted on the school's website under 'Eating Together at Heschel: A Kashrut Handbook for our Diverse Community,' when completed.

B. SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

The school is committed to Sh'mirat Shabbat, Sabbath observance. No school activities are conducted on Shabbat or religious holidays. Parents are urged to schedule birthday parties and other school-related gatherings on days other than Shabbat and religious holidays. When planning a simcha or other event on Saturday evening, please try to begin at least one hour after the conclusion of Shabbat.

Committee members are reminded not to email or make phone calls to families on Shabbat and religious holidays.

C. HEAD COVERINGS – Kissuy

Please Refer to Dress code.

D. PRAYERS

Prayer is an important part of the religious and educational experience at The Toronto Heschel School. Our goal is to familiarize our students not only with the content of the prayer book and the history of its development, but also to provide the intellectual and spiritual tools necessary to appreciate a relationship with God. True pluralism and mutual respect begins with dialogue, and dialogue cannot flourish without knowledge. Within the prayer experience throughout the school, students are provided with skills and information appropriate to their age and comprehension, to begin the journey of self-evaluation that prayer is meant to be.

At the Early Years and Elementary level, students are introduced to prayer practices and concepts. Through music and physical expression, students learn to acknowledge a relationship God, to understand that form—standing and sitting—are related to establishing that relationship, that the words of the siddur are special and carefully chosen, and that the power of concentration is required for thinking of God.

At the Junior High level, the opportunity exists for students to experience different ways in which Jews pray, to find deeper connections and meaning in prayer and to understand the dual nature of the individual and the community at prayer.

On Thursday mornings, Junior High students and teachers pray together in our egalitarian Tefillah Betzibur. We use the pluralistic Toronto Heschel Siddur, which is a compilation of prayers in both traditional and alternative formats.

Monday is our "Keva Tefillah" where students pray together in their homeroom classes. Keva Tefillah aims to have students strengthen Tefillah literacy with a good understanding of how to daven.

Tuesday is our "Kavannah Tefillah" where students will rotate through a variety of modalities. Kavannah Tefillah aims to give the students a deeper exploration and personal connection to prayer. Some of these modalities include: Jewish Mind and Meditation, Movement and Music and Tefillah and Philosophy.

Wednesday is our "Kehillah Tefillah" where students gather in minyanim that reflect the diverse Jewish communities in our society. We will hold minyanim that reflect the prayers practices of the Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist, and Reform communities. Each minyan will use a Siddur used by their respective community. Students who are bnei mitzvah may choose their Kehillah minyan, and are also encouraged to attend other minyanim from time to time to support their peers in their prayer choices.

On Fridays students participate in Learning Tefillah classes to study prayers in more depth.

E. RELIGIOUS TEXTS

From the earliest grades, the study of Chumash will be augmented by Midrashim and commentaries. Midrashim not only help to interpret the intent of the Torah, but frequently bridge periods of time, making the message of the Bible more contemporary and meaningful. The status of Midrashim is that of commentaries rather than sacred texts. Therefore, more liberties may be taken with their usage. Students will also be encouraged to weave their own commentaries and meanings into the biblical story, thus bringing the Torah and other Books of the Tanakh even closer to their hearts and minds. As in prayer, emphasis is on meaning and understanding over memorization and rote. In upper grades, when Tanach and selections from Mishnah are studied from text, students learn to distinguish between simple meaning of the text 'peshat', the Midrashim and commentaries - for example, Rashi 'drash' - as well as the deeper meaning of the text 'remez' and 'sod' The study of Talmud begins in grade 7.

X. SCHOOL OFFICE

Office staff is available for help and assist Monday to Thursday from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Communication via e-mail is preferred (see list below). For educational purposes, the school is divided into three groups - Early Years - grades JK-1, Elementary - grades 2-5 and Junior High - grades 6-8.

A. SCHOOL GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

The Toronto Heschel School
819 Sheppard Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario M3H 2T3

Telephone: 416-635-1876
Fax: 416-635-1800
Email: info@torontoheschel.org

B. E-MAIL ADDRESSES

All members of the staff have a school assigned e-mail box '@torontoheschel.org' The address consists of the first letter of the individual's first name, followed without spaces by the last name, e.g., gbeiles@torontoheschel.org. In addition, school administrators and support staff have e-mail boxes with addresses based on the position, e.g., head@torontoheschel.org. E-mail is the preferred method of communication with the School. The method of a teacher's response to a parent request - written note, voice or e-mail - is at the teacher's discretion.

C. SCHOOL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Listed below are school extensions for positions throughout the school. A complete listing, including staff voice mail boxes will be circulated electronically and will be periodically updated.

STAFF	POSITION	416.635.1876 Ext.	E-Mail @torontoheschel.org
Abramsohn, Mark	Director, Business Operations	225	admin
Amouyal, Lea	Reception	221	reception
	Absences & Attendance	400	absences
Austin, Greg	Facilities Services	235	facilities
Axmith, Marlene	Development / Fundraising	214	development
Beiles, Greg	Head of School	228	head
Dilouya Ben-Shabbat, Nathalie	Student Services	226	students
Friedman, Heidi	Director of Early Years & Child Study JK-GR.2	332	hfriedman
Regan, Malka	Director of Elementary	224	mregan
Richler, Lisa	Director of Admissions, Marketing & Community Development	334	admissions
Rosemarin, Rachel	Accounting /Accounts Receivable	227	rosemarin
Sharet, Edna	Director of Junior High	230	esharet
Turner-Sack, Andrea	Child Study Grades 3-8	320	aturnersack
Carson, Jaimie	Marketing & Communications	229	jcarson

XI. SCHOOL ROUTINES

GETTING ACQUAINTED

In August, all families will receive a comprehensive communication from the school with important school documents including the parent handbook, office index card, medical forms, school directory and other important information. To the extent possible, this communication will be electronic. All communications will be sent to families after registration formalities have been completed. Also a welcome letter from your child's teacher will be sent about two weeks before the first day of school to outline the classroom routines and expectations. Parents will be invited to a curriculum night during the first month of school where they can hear firsthand an outline of the curriculum planned for the year and meet the teachers.

TRANSPORTATION

The school has facilitated busing service to and from the school for certain areas. The use and cost of this service is the responsibility of the parents. For more information, please contact the school at ext. 229 or via email at heschel@torontoheschel.org.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY

Classroom doors open at 8:20 a.m., and classroom activities begin at 8:30 a.m. Latecomers disturb the flow for teachers and fellow students. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. are considered late and must report to the office to receive a late note that is to be handed to the classroom teacher upon entry.

Lateness will be recorded on attendance sheets and noted on report cards. In addition, work missed by students in the upper grades may be assigned to be completed during 'Office Hours,' which is time set aside during lunch and/or recess break.

ESCORTING STUDENTS INTO AND OUT OF THE BUILDING

Students who arrive before 8:20 a.m. must go to ‘Kids Club’, unless an adult is supervising them. For safety and security reasons, no child should be left unsupervised. Students in grades JK-1 should be escorted by parents or designated adult to their classroom door. Parents of students in grades 2-4 are to escort their children either to the main entrance or the hallway. The students will proceed to the classroom by themselves. Students in grades 5-8 should enter the building by themselves. At the end of the school day, parents of students in grades JK-2 may wait for dismissal in the entry hall. Students in grades 3-4 will be brought to the doors on the first floor for dismissal. Students in grades 5-8 are dismissed from their classrooms.

ON STREET PARKING, THE PARKING LOT AND PICK-UP & DROP-OFF

The current parking lot does not accommodate parking for staff and parents simultaneously. In order to effectively manage the available space, the following rules apply:

- The parking lot at 819 Sheppard Avenue West, accessed off of Faywood Boulevard, is only available for staff parking. It is not available during the school day **at any time** for parent parking or student drop-off / pick-up.
- There is legal parking on Faywood Boulevard and McAllister Road. When parking, please obey posted signs, and be sure not to block private driveways. ***Please be mindful of the ‘No Parking’ signs between the school driveways.***
- Parents / caregivers wishing to park their cars and escort children to the building can park their vehicles in any legally marked parking space, along ***either Faywood Boulevard, or McAllister Road.*** ***When using this option*** it is important that cars be parked on the side of the street closest to the school, i.e., the east side of Faywood or the north side of McAllister, so that students do not have to cross the street to enter the school’s property.
- If parking along McAllister, please note that there is an opening in the fence around our property at the corner of Faywood and McAllister, to allow student access into the field portion of our property. Parents/caregivers are more than welcome to accompany their children through the field to the school building.
- *The School assumes no responsibility for illegal parking or consequences of such acts, e.g. parking tickets.*

For any of the options listed above, we would remind all parents / caregivers who will be arriving at the school during morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up by automobile, that our school is located within a heavy residential area. As such, we wish to maintain positive and collegial relationships with all of our neighbours at all times. We would ask all Heschel families to make certain that when parking or stopping on either Faywood or McAllister, that private driveways are not blocked, never to park in a private driveway and not to block the street by double parking. Also, please be mindful that at these times of day, there will always be children outdoors. Help us to ensure the safety of all children in the neighbourhood, by driving carefully at all times.

SCHOOL HOURS

	Monday - Thursday			Long Friday			Short Friday		
GRADE	JK-3	4-5	6-8	JK-3	4-5	6-8	JK-3	4-5	6-8
Start	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30	8:30
Dismissal	3:45	4:00	4:15	3:45	3:45	3:45	2:35	2:35	2:35

ABSENCES

Guided by the mitzvah of bikur cholim (attending the sick), students will reach out to classmates who are sick to help them catch up academically or merely to cheer them up. Please expect calls and, when appropriate, visits from your Heschel family.

If prior notice of a student's absence has not been given, parents are requested to contact the School Office before 8:45 a.m. to advise that the student will be absent. Parents may either leave a message at telephone extension 400 or send an e-mail message to absences@torontoheschel.org. Where no communication has been received regarding a student's absence, a phone call will be made to the parents.

Absences will be noted on report cards.

The nature of our school and the integrated curriculum requires us to maximize each and every minute of class time from the opening exercises to the closing activities. Parents are respectfully asked not to make appointments or schedule activities that require students to come late or leave early from school. Besides being disruptive to the class, it puts students at a disadvantage since they are likely missing important skill development and instruction.

If your child/ren will be missing school for a period of time, please notify the school office and the homeroom teacher by sending an email containing the length of the absence. Extending vacations beyond school dates is particularly disruptive. Please consult the School Calendar when planning family vacations.

When students are absent from school for illness or life-cycle events, parents may call the school or send a note to the teacher to request class work and homework assignments. We regret that this courtesy cannot be extended to families who choose to take their children out of school for family holidays or vacations on days when school is in session.

G. BEING-PRESENT AND ON-TIME

Being here matters! At Heschel, we intentionally plan all classroom time to ensure the optimal learning experience for your children. Our experiential approach to learning means that children who are absent are missing important learning experiences. Hands-on learning often can't be given for homework. Your child is an important part of the learning community, for her or himself, and for others.

Transition times, such as the beginning of the day, are particularly important. For many children, entering class calmly and with some time to organize themselves helps set them up for learning for the rest of the day. This is true at any age.

Therefore, we ask parents to make every effort to ensure children arrive at school with enough time to begin learning at 8:30 a.m. Usually this means 8:20 a.m. would be the latest time you would want to arrive. We also ask that families make every effort to schedule appointments outside of school time.

For safety reasons, and since lateness and absence can affect children's learning, we need to keep track of student lateness and absenteeism. We ask children who arrive late -- without enough time to enter class ready to learn by 8:30 a.m. -- to please sign in at the office and take a late slip. Generally students arriving after 8:28 a.m. will be asked to sign in at the office. If your child arrives late repeatedly or is repeatedly absent we will contact you.

H. SHARING LEARNING WITH FAMILIES AND SIBLINGS

As a learning community, we provide many opportunities throughout the school year for students in different grades to share their learning with one another. In each grade there are special events to which parents, grandparents, and other family members and friends are also invited. Please check the school calendar, bulletin, and notices from teachers for information about these events.

Certain events may also be appropriate for siblings in the school to attend. In order to minimize disruption and ensure continuity to children's own learning, we ask that parents respect the following guidelines for sibling attendance at events.

Siblings are invited to the special birthday celebrations that take place in Junior and Senior Kindergarten only. This practice ends by Grade One. Siblings may also attend the special Junior High Tefillah Betzibur that commemorates students becoming Bnai Mitzvah.

Siblings are invited to attend a major class event / presentation to which parents are invited provided (a) the event is age-appropriate, (b) the sibling hasn't already seen the presentation as part of our regular inter-grade sharing program, (c) there is enough space to accommodate siblings, (d) siblings are not missing an important learning activity in their own class. Families will receive notices from teachers to let them know when an event is open to siblings. Siblings are asked to return to class immediately following the main portion of the event.

In all cases, parents are asked to check with the teachers of siblings to make sure that they will not be missing an essential learning experience. Parents are asked to please respect teachers' decisions on whether it would be appropriate for students to miss class for a sibling event. Sibling events are limited to siblings and do not involve other children in the school, such as cousins or family friends.

When no family member is available to attend an important school event, we ask that you contact your child's teacher so that an accommodation can be made to ensure that no child feels left out.

I. OFFICE HOURS (Student Study Periods)

A structured study period called "Office Hours," is available for students in grades 3-8 who have missed work due to absence or lateness, who have outstanding assignments, or who would like extra help. Office Hours takes place during part of the recess period after lunch. Attendance at 'Office Hours' takes precedence over other lunch hour or recess activities.

J. GOING HOME FROM SCHOOL

At the beginning of the school year, families will be asked to complete a 'Carpool Information Form' listing the regular pick-up arrangements that have been made for safe arrival and departure to and from school. The school does not arrange carpools; however, a parent directory is available from the School Office to assist parents in making these arrangements.

When a child will be going home with a friend from school or if different arrangements from the regular pickup have been made, a note must be sent to the child's teacher authorizing this change. Only in cases of unavoidable last-minute changes should the School Office be contacted to make these arrangements.

When someone unfamiliar to the School Office is picking up a child, that individual must have written and signed permission from parents/guardians. Such permission cannot be arranged by phone. If this is not done, the child's departure will be delayed until the school can contact one of the parents.

Grades 4-8 students are allowed to self-dismiss with parents' permission.

Self-dismissal means that after the teacher dismisses the class at the end of the day, students must leave the building without teacher supervision.

Parents/Guardians will resume responsibility for their child/ren after they have been self-dismissed, and the school is no longer liable even if students remain on school grounds.

K. TELEPHONES AND STUDENTS

Students may not use cell phones at school. Students who bring cell phones to school must ensure that they are turned off during school hours and left in their school bag or locker.

Students that may need to call home during the day must receive permission from a school administrator prior to doing so. In case of a medical problem or emergency, the School Office staff will contact parents. The School Office cannot be responsible for conveying messages to students except in emergency situations.

L. KIDS' CLUB

The School offers a before and after hours childcare service. This programme is called Kids' Club.

Kids' Club is offered from 7:50 a.m.- 8:30 a.m. and from dismissal - 6:00 p.m. daily. The exceptions are: LONG Fridays (regular closing), Kids' Club closes at 5:00 p.m.

SHORT Fridays (early closing), Kids' Club closes at 3:30 p.m.

During Parent-Teacher conferences, Kids' Club is in operation from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

On PD Days following the Parent Teacher Conferences, Kids' Club will be available from 7:50 a.m. till 12:00 noon. On PD Days that are not Parent-Teacher Conferences related, Kids Club will be available from 7:50 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pre-registration is required for Parent-Teacher conference days and PD Days.

Kids' Club will not be available on the days before a Jewish holiday (Erev Chag).

The morning session charge is \$6.00. The after hours' charge is \$3.00 for every half hour or part thereof. Payment is by way of 'Kids Club Credits' that must be pre-purchased through the Business/Accounting Office. These credits cost \$6.00 per unit, and may be purchased by cheque, cash or credit card. These units can be used as needed and are transferable from year to year. A detailed form is available on the School website.

Kid's Club "credits", for both morning and afternoon sessions, must be pre-purchased in advance by completing a registration form and returning it to the School's main office by September 6, 2016. Credits may be topped up during the school year. If you have any questions please contact the Accounting Department (ext. 227 or via email: rosemarin@torontoheschel.org).

Parents using Kids' Club must provide the school with credit card information that will be kept on file for the purpose of purchasing additional units if needed. PLEASE NOTE: that prior to a charge being applied a notification email will be sent to parents advising of such transaction.

Parents who have not purchased Kids' Club units and use Kids' Club intermittently, must provide the accounting office with credit card details in order for the payment to be processed.

M. INCLEMENT WEATHER

There are times during the year when it may be necessary to close the school due to inclement weather.

When weather conditions are extremely poor, announcements by radio stations CFRB, CHUM and CBC are usually made by 7:00 a.m. These announcements will relay that schools will be closed and/or transportation services will not be available that day. The announcement may not identify The Toronto Heschel School by name. The radio announcement will state that "All Jewish Day schools affiliated with the UJA Federation Centre for Jewish Education will be closed." or a similar announcement.

If possible, an email and/or an automated telephone announcement will be sent to families using the telephone number and/or email supplied to the office as parental contact.

Such closing is based not only on the likelihood of children being able to arrive and leave safely, but also on whether the proper supervision can be in place if the school is open.

NOTE: Often when the weather is poor, parents choose to collect students early. When doing so, please come into the School Office to sign the children out, and the office staff will get them from the classroom(s). If family members or friends collect children, please have them identify themselves and provide a note signed by the parent authorizing this pick up. It is the car-pool driver's responsibility to obtain permission from parents to collect children early in inclement weather conditions. The school will only release children to carpools at such times.

N. SCHOOL TRIPS AND PROGRAMMES

School trips and special activities are compulsory and are considered to be regular school days for the purpose of attendance. Parents will provide permission for their child/ren to participate in all school trips and excursion by signing the office index card provided as part of the summer mailing package. In addition, trip notification forms may be sent to parents announcing the date, time and purpose of each trip.

Trip fees are covered by the annual activity fee due in September of each year. Fees for the annual trips for grades 6, 7 and 8 are not included in the comprehensive activity fee. However, no student will be prevented from participating in any school event for financial reasons. If required, parents may confidentially request assistance by approaching the Director Business Operations.

O. BOOMERANG LUNCH

Consistent with our environmental policy, one of our goals is to reduce the amount of waste generated in our school community. To advance this objective, every day is 'Boomerang Lunch Day.' Simply stated everything that comes to school with lunch, goes home after lunch.

P. HEALTHY EATING

Consistent with our philosophy of Holistic Learning and concern for the Whole Child we strongly advocate healthy eating habits. Families are asked to please send nutritious lunches and snacks for their children. When sending food for special occasions, such as birthdays, class celebrations, and chaggim, please choose healthy options such as fruit, cheese, vegetables and dip (Please consult our Kashrut policy. Families are welcome to use our kitchen to cut up fruit and vegetables). Please do not send items high in sugar such as ice-cream, cake, cupcakes, doughnuts, soda pop, candies, etc... for distribution in class.

Q. FOOD ALLERGIES

The Toronto Heschel School aims to provide a safe environment for all of its students. The school is committed to the fundamental Jewish value of pikuach nefesh, which is the principle that the saving of a life at stake prevails over all other interests. Following that guiding principle, the school has adopted "Life Threatening Food Allergies: Risk Minimization and Management Policy" to support its efforts to minimize the risk to its students who have life-threatening food allergies (otherwise known as anaphylaxis).

The foods and substances which most commonly cause anaphylactic reactions are peanuts, nuts and their respective families of products. Even accidental exposure to trace amount of these foods can be fatal to the anaphylactic child who comes into contact with them. In the school setting, we are concerned about the possible contamination through the use of shared items such as toys, books, computers and the outdoor play equipment.

We therefore ask that peanut butter, peanuts, other nuts and all foods which contain peanut or nut products or are made with peanut or nut products (e.g., peanut or nut oil) NOT be brought onto school premises at any time. If the package has any warning on the label such as 'may contain traces of nut/peanuts' or 'has been produced on equipment which comes in contact with nuts/peanuts' or similar phrase, ***it cannot be consumed in the school or at school-related activities.*** In addition, hand washing before coming to school is strongly encouraged and seriously recommended, especially if peanut butter or other peanut or nut products have been eaten. A list of approved bakeries can be obtained from the School Office.

In addition to being dairy or pareve (neither meat nor dairy), any foods brought to school for distribution to the entire class (e.g. for class birthday celebrations) or purchased for school-wide celebrations, etc. must be either (a) packaged foods containing clearly labeled ingredients that are acceptable under this policy, or (b) baked or prepared foods purchased from a bakery, caterer or other supplier which has declared the food to be 'peanut-and-nut-free.' These items must be selected from the following list or brought to the School Office to obtain signed approval before being brought to class. This policy relating to food allergies is in addition to the Kashrut policy of the school.

XII. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SECURITY IS OUR CONCERN

The Toronto Heschel School is committed to providing its students, staff, parents and visitors with a safe and secure environment. The school maintains contact with appropriate police, fire and Jewish community agencies on all matters relating to safety and security. Everyone using the school is asked to maintain a sense of vigilance regarding security and safety. The eyes and ears of our school community are our best protection.

Please note that our main entrance - on the south side of the building facing Faywood and McAllister - is electronically controlled and monitored, with the use of electronic door strikes, and a buzzer / camera system. The main entrance will be “unlocked” during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. At all other times, it will be electronically locked. Visitors arriving outside of those times are to “buzz” in order to gain entrance and proceed to sign in at the office. However, at any time, office staff might be preoccupied with student, staff and parent needs and might not be available to answer each and every door buzz on the first request. We ask for continued patience and understanding that this security is of benefit to all.

The entire school perimeter, including all exits, is monitored by closed-circuit security cameras twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

All other exterior doors into our facility will be permanently locked from the outside. Consistent with fire regulations, all exterior doors can be opened from the inside, in the event that a facility evacuation is necessary.

All visitors must sign into the building and wear a ‘Visitor Tag’ while on school premises. Visitors to the school must first report to the School Office immediately upon entering the building. This includes parents who are entering the school for other than drop-off or pick-up purposes.

At no time, other than drop off or pick up are parents allowed to go directly to the classrooms. The exception to this will be when parents were invited to do so in advance.

Our school has staff members who are trained in Health and Safety matters. Regular checks of our premises are done and any hazards are identified and reported to administration to immediately initiate follow-up actions.

In addition, the school has a Health Committee. It is chaired by a practicing physician and its volunteer members are also primarily physicians representing diverse areas of practice. The Committee is responsible for policy issues such as storage and administration of medications, management of students with anaphylactic reactions, etc.

The school is not responsible for students’ possessions. All bags must be clearly labeled.

Lockers are the property of the school. Students must maintain them in a manner consistent with the values and principles of the school. Should the Head of School or designate deem it necessary, lockers are subject to search. Such searches will be conducted by at least two people, at least one of whom is a member of the administration, and will be conducted with due respect for personal property.

Should parents have any concerns regarding safety or security at The Toronto Heschel School; this can be discussed with the Director Business Operations.

B. EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Fire drills and evacuation drills take place at the school on a regular basis. Evacuation instructions are posted in every classroom. In the event that an emergency evacuation from the school occurs, parents will receive a phone call requesting that students be picked up from Yeshivat Or Chaim, 159 Almore Avenue, at the corner of Faywood Boulevard, and Almore Avenue, south of the school, or at Darchei Noam Congregation on Sheppard Avenue.

At the beginning of the school year, parents and/or guardians will be asked to provide a telephone number and email address for this purpose. This information may be provided to appropriate class parents who will assist the school in communicating with parents.

C. REPORTING A CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION

Upon suspicion that a child has suffered:

- physical harm, or
- has been sexually molested or exploited or
- requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering or
- suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-destructive or aggressive behaviour or
- been abandoned,

the school is duty bound to report this information to Jewish Family and Child Service, a member of the children’s aid society in the Province of Ontario. As the Ministry of Education guidelines state, “It is the responsibility of the children’s aid society, and if necessary, the police, to conduct an investigation into the possibility that a child is in need of protection. School personnel who suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, should not conduct an investigation regarding their suspicions or the disclosures of the child, and shall question the child only to clarify the nature of the complaint.” This process applies even though the information reported may be confidential or privileged.

D. ONGOING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

All ongoing medical conditions, including allergies, must be disclosed on the registration form or if contracted during the school year, reported in writing to the school. The school may require independent medical assessment or documentation. If Epi-Pens are required, an extra supply must be left in the School Office together with a picture of the student, a completed form and a copy of the prescription.

E. COMMUNICABLE AND REPORTABLE DISEASES

The well-being of our students is our number one priority. We will notify parents of any outbreaks of communicable diseases which we are notified of. There are several communicable diseases that must be reported to the School office. These include: chicken pox, measles, meningitis, mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), and rubella. Instances of fifth disease should also be reported to the School office.

As part of our educational process, students will be reminded of the necessity to wash hands and to use hand sanitizers in the absence of water and soap. Hand sanitizers will be available at the School Office for use by visitors and in public areas of the school for the use of students and staff. The School will continue its practice to contact parents whose children develop fever during the school day to arrange for pick up.

F. ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

Medications are administered only through the School Office. ANY medications to be taken by students must be brought to the School Office and will only be administered under the supervision of a member of the office staff. In connection with medication for students, the following rules must be observed:

- Prescription drugs must be in their original packaging with the pharmacy label clearly attached.
- There must be written permission of the parent or guardian to administer the medication.

Staff cannot administer “over the counter” medication or naturopathic compounds, nor can medication of any kind be self-administered by students. Exceptions are as follows:

- With proper documented prescriptions students may self-administer inhalers/puffers. Written approval for this must be provided by the parent or guardian and should be on file in the School Office.
- The school will only keep and administer ‘Tylenol’ for symptomatic relief of pain and fever and will administer it only if there is a permission slip on file or after making reasonable attempts to contact a parent or guardian. In cases where Tylenol is administered, parents will be notified.

G. EPI-PENS

Adrenaline (epinephrine) is the commonly prescribed treatment for an anaphylactic response. Adrenaline is commonly contained in an ‘auto-injector’ instrument known as an Epi-Pen. An Epi-Pen is the anaphylactic child’s lifesaver, and can be administered by any responsible adult when needed. Students requiring Epi-Pens must carry at least one EpiPen with them at all times. A second Epi-Pen must be kept in the School Office. This pen will be taken by the child’s teacher on any class trips. Parents must ensure that their anaphylactic children are aware of the requirements of the EpiPen, and to ensure that EpiPens have not expired. A detailed explanation of the school’s policy on this and other life threatening food allergies is attached as an appendix to this handbook.

Please note: Parents of anaphylactic students are responsible for ensuring that the “Profile of an Anaphylactic Student” form is properly completed and submitted to the School Office.

H. LICE

School-wide lice checks are done in September and after the Pesach break, and at other time as the school may decide. We will continue to adhere to a Nit-Free Policy for children’s return to the school. Parents will be notified regarding students who have been identified to have lice/nits. Upon return to school parents are to bring a note from a recognized lice-checking agency or family doctor stating that the student/s is/are free from nits and/or lice. Based on the guidelines of the Public Health Department, all parents of affected children are notified of reported cases of lice in the school. Although a nuisance, lice infestation is not a health hazard and the affected children’s privacy will be respected. Parents have a choice of treatments available to them that ranges from over the counter shampoos to Natural Compounds. Public health fact sheets regarding the transmission and treatment of lice are available online at:

AFTER SCHOOL USE OF THE PLAYGROUND

Parents are reminded that there is no after school supervision of students on the playground. Parents who wish to have their children play on school grounds after dismissal, do so at their own risk. The Toronto Heschel School assumes no responsibility whatsoever for incidents or injuries occurring after regular school hours.

XIII. **HOMEWORK**

OVERVIEW

At The Toronto Heschel School, we consider childhood to be a unique phase of life, in which the enjoyment of play, family, friends, sporting activities and artistic endeavours are of vital importance, as is the involvement in study at school and at home. Together with sufficient time to sleep and relax, these involvements shape the way children experience themselves and the world around them. The nature and amount of homework should allow for time to learn in a structured way as well as time to appreciate these many aspects of life. We believe that it is critical that school, teachers, parents and students work together to make homework a positive learning experience. This document is divided into several sections. The first part of the document defines the purpose and scheduling of homework. The second part defines the role of the school, the parent, the teacher and the student in regards to homework. The third part delineates purposes and expectations for homework as they apply to individual grades.

PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

We consider homework an opportunity to:

- Reinforce a sense of personal responsibility;
- Reinforce the lessons taught during the school day;
- Support students in the preparation for tests;
- Apply research and presentation skills taught during the school day; and
- Establish good home study habits and routines.

Homework is one of the many ways students consolidate lessons taught during the school day. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to complete homework independently.

Communication between home, school and student is essential in supporting a positive outcome.

SCHEDULING OF HOMEWORK

The homework schedule varies by grade, as outlined in Section H.

In accordance with our commitment to Jewish values, any homework assigned on Friday will not be due the following Monday.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

- To create procedures for implementing this document.
- To create systems and processes to ensure that the policy is followed on an ongoing basis.
- To ensure that the content of this policy and the philosophy behind it are clearly communicated to all teachers prior to the commencement of the school year.
- To ensure that teachers adequately plan and integrate homework into the school's various programmes.
- In grades where a team of teachers is involved in assigning homework to a class, the school will appoint the homeroom teacher as 'Homeroom Coordinator.' The Homeroom teacher will be responsible for coordinating homework assignments between teachers, for communicating with parents about all aspects of homework, (e.g. days homework will be assigned, general details about all assignments, information about due dates, etc.) and will deal with any problems should they arise.

- To ensure that the contents of this policy are communicated to parents by each grade team at the beginning of each school year.
- To create and clearly communicate a process for dealing with homework issues that may be raised by parents.
- To provide parents with pertinent information about anticipated homework expectations so that families are able to plan for and balance extra-curricular activities with school activities in a timely manner.

ROLE OF THE PARENT

The parents' role is to support the children in completing homework as independently as possible.

- Parents should provide children with an appropriate place and supplies that will allow them to successfully complete their homework on a regular basis.
- Parents should check their children's homework folder or agenda book on a regular basis. Where appropriate, parents must also sign agenda books.
- Mistakes are a valuable tool for both teachers and children to assess gaps and areas where further learning in the classroom needs to occur. Therefore, when children cannot complete an assignment correctly, it is both expected and desirable that they return the homework with mistakes or blanks. When children struggle with the homework, parents can explain the expectations, ask them to review their work in order to identify possible mistakes, or ask questions that will lead them to discovery of the correct answer.
- Time spent on homework should not exceed the guidelines detailed in this policy. If the assignment takes longer than the time set for the child's grade level, parents will ensure that they stop working and will send a letter notifying the teacher that the homework was taking longer than the expectation for that level.
- Parents should help their children prioritize extra-curricular activities to ensure that there is time to complete homework assignments. The school will support this process by providing families with pertinent information about anticipated homework expectations in a manner that will enable proper advance planning.
- At the Elementary level, as part of homework, parents are encouraged to listen to their children read on a regular basis. This is intended to be a pleasurable experience and not a time for instruction.
- Parents will communicate to their children's teacher any concerns that they may have regarding the homework.
- If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent children from doing their homework, the parents will communicate this to the teacher, preferably in writing.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

By the first day of school, the homeroom teachers will identify themselves to the parents. The Homeroom teachers will communicate how homework will be coordinated among teachers and what parents can expect regarding the assignment of homework to the class.

- Teachers may assign work not completed at school for homework at their discretion.
- Teachers will plan homework assignments for their class in accordance with the time framework set out in this document (i.e. number of days per week, time spent per night).
- Teachers will ensure that the students understand the homework instructions or project guidelines and send home an age appropriate written record of the requirements. The responsibility for the actual recording of the homework instructions lies with either the teachers or students, depending on the grade level in question (see Expectations by grade Level).
- Teachers, under the leadership of the Homeroom teacher, will coordinate the giving and timing of assignments in order to avoid conflicts with other subject areas and to avoid overburdening children.
- Teachers will collect, mark and return homework to the students, with appropriate comments, in a timely manner, recognizing that the feedback on homework serves as an important learning tool for the students.
- Teachers will assign, collect, mark and return draft work on longer projects in manageable chunks, with appropriate comments, in a timely manner, throughout the duration of the project. This will ensure that projects are not overwhelming while enabling students to learn planning and time management skills in addition to practicing research skills as assigned.
- Teachers will help students to develop organizational skills that will assist them in developing effective homework, project completion and study routines.

- Tests, sections of project work and specific assignments will be marked and returned to the students before subsequent tests take place or similar assignments are due, thus allowing students to incorporate the teachers' feedback into their new work.
- Teachers will check the students' homework folder or student agenda on a regular basis.
- In situations where children miss school due to illness, only homework necessary to close gaps for work missed will be assigned once they return to school. Special attention will be given to avoid overburdening children upon their return.
- In situations where students are regularly unable to complete homework or complete it improperly on a recurring basis, a further exploration of the student's circumstances and needs will take place.
- Teachers will be available to meet and work individually with students who have difficulty completing their homework.
- Where accommodations to a homework assignment have been made, those accommodations will be communicated to the parents, either orally or in written form.
- Teachers will be sensitive to extenuating circumstances communicated by the parent.

ROLE OF THE STUDENT

Students are expected to complete their homework (including project work) on time.

- Students will record their homework and ensure that they understand the assignment for the day.
- Students are expected to bring home all the supplies and information necessary for completing the homework assignments.
- Together with parents, students will identify the optimal space and time for completion of homework. Students will also inform parents of the supplies needed for them to complete their homework.
- Students are responsible for handing in their homework according to the plan and routine of their particular class.

PURPOSE AND EXPECTATIONS BY GRADE LEVEL

KINDERGARTEN

The purpose of homework at the SK level is to begin to introduce some of the responsibilities associated with homework. The "Borrow a Book" programme is the primary vehicle by which this is done.

At this level, homework is a joint responsibility between parents and children.

GRADES 1 & 2

The primary goal of homework at this stage is to increase the sense of responsibility begun at the Kindergarten level. In addition, homework will now begin to reinforce the lessons taught during the day. By the end of grade 1, project work involving parents' support may be completed at home. By the end of grade 2, some parts of projects may be completed independently by the children at home. In both years, however, the majority of the project will be completed in class.

Homework at this level is sent home two or three times a week in a special homework folder. Students should expect to spend no more than half an hour on homework.

In addition to written assignments, students will be expected to practice reading (Hebrew and/or English) on a regular basis.

Teachers will provide sufficient class time to explain the assignment thoroughly and ensure that students have an opportunity to demonstrate that they understand what is expected of them (i.e. teacher may demonstrate a sample question, students will have time to ask questions).

Homework assignments will be accompanied by clear, written instructions provided by the teacher, and included in the homework folder, explaining the expectations to the student in age appropriate language. Teachers will also supervise students to ensure that homework is taken home and is returned to the teacher when expected. Parents should check their children's homework folders daily.

If students have trouble completing the work in the allotted time, parents are expected to write an explanatory note which children can hand in along with the incomplete work. If parents note frustration on the part of their children because of the nature of the homework (e.g. too demanding or significantly too easy), that, too, should be communicated to the teacher.

GRADE 3

The main goal of homework at this level continues to be that of fostering a sense of responsibility while reinforcing the lessons taught during the school day.

Students can expect homework to be assigned approximately three times a week. They may also receive certain assignments or parts of projects to be completed over a number of days or weeks. In addition, students can expect to occasionally prepare for class tests at home. Teachers will give plenty of notice and provide suggestions and/or guides to assist the students in their review. Work for homework, test preparation and projects should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. An increasing amount of project work may also be completed at home. The majority of most projects will, however, be researched and organized in class.

As this is the first year that student agendas are used it is imperative that good organizational habits are established. Students will begin, with strong support from classroom teachers, to take responsibility for independently recording homework in their student agenda and organizing materials needed. Teachers will continue to review assignments during class time and provide ample opportunities for students to clarify expectations. Teachers will also check the students' agendas daily to ensure that the homework assignment has been properly recorded prior to the children's dismissal. Teachers will continue to monitor that students take homework home with them and return it to school as assigned. Agendas must be signed by parents daily and checked by teachers for signatures.

GRADES 4 & 5

The main goal of homework at this stage is to practice and consolidate new concepts taught during the day. It also gives students an opportunity to finish work not completed in class. Students will be given a wider range of assignments including daily review, preparation for tests, short term and long term project work.

Beginning at this stage, there is a new focus on developing time management and organizational skills such as prioritizing assignments, estimating appropriate time to complete work and recording tests and project due dates. In grade 4, students are introduced to some homework and project work with longer due dates where some planning for completion must take place. As part of the assignment, teachers provide a framework for completing smaller tasks in the larger assignment. By the end of grade 5 students will be able, with teacher supervision, to do much of this planning independently. Many parts of projects may be completed at home. The teacher will review expectations and monitor task completion in class on an ongoing basis.

At this level, students can expect that assignments for homework and/or project work are given every week night, but not from every subject. Certain subjects will be assigned on specified nights. Students in grade 4 can expect to do up to 40 minutes of homework, test preparation or project work on assigned nights, while students in grade 5 may expect up to 50 minutes. There will be strong communication and planning between teachers in order to ensure that students are not inadvertently overloaded.

In grade 4 students are expected to take responsibility for recording homework in their student agenda and organizing materials needed to complete assignments. Teachers will ensure that assignments in all subjects are recorded in a central place in the class. Teachers will continue to review assignments during class time and provide ample opportunities for students to clarify expectations. Teachers will check students' agendas daily to ensure that the homework assignment has been properly recorded prior to the students' dismissal. They will also continue to monitor that students take homework home with them and return it to school as assigned. Agendas must be signed by parents daily and checked for signatures by the homeroom teacher on a regular basis.

By the end of grade 5, students are expected to complete these tasks with minimal supervision from teachers. Teachers will continue to monitor that assignments are recorded accurately and that they are returned to school as assigned, signing off on agendas as required. Finally, by the end of grade 5, students are expected to begin to take the initiative to clarify expectations and areas of difficulty with increasing independence.

JUNIOR HIGH

The main goal of homework at this stage continues to be the practice and consolidation of new concepts taught during the day. Emphasis on the development and reinforcement of time management and organizational skills continues to increase. In addition to daily review, short & long term project work, test preparation will take on a greater degree of importance. In grade 6, students can expect to do up to 1 hour of homework/project work on assigned nights. In grade 7 and 8, students can expect to do up to 1.5 hours of homework/project work on assigned nights.

Students are expected to independently record homework assignments in their student agenda as it is assigned in each subject class. Homeroom teachers will provide a central location where all assignments from all teachers are recorded.

Students are expected to gather the necessary materials to complete the assignments successfully (e.g. text and notebooks, writing materials etc.) They are expected to prioritize assignments and complete them independently and on time. At this level, the responsibility for clarifying expectations and areas of difficulty rests primarily with the student.

TUTORING

There may be circumstances where additional academic support is required to assist in student success. Engaging a tutor is at the discretion of the parent. Without written permission of the principal, members of the staff cannot tutor a student currently enrolled in the school.

XIV. SCHOOL RECORDS, PROGRESS AND EVALUATION

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDENT INFORMATION

The school requires that up-to-date biographical information of each student be maintained in the School Office. A short form of this information is maintained as required by the Ontario Ministry of Education. This information will also be used in case of emergency. An Office Index Card, to be completed for each student will be mailed in August and must be returned to the School Office by the first day of school. Biographical student information is confidential and is not shared unless required by law. Parents of students in grade 8 will

be asked to authorize distribution of their name, address and telephone number to secondary schools affiliated with the UJA Federation - Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education to help students and parents make informed decisions about choices for high school.

ONTARIO STUDENT RECORDS

The Ministry of Education requires that Ontario Student Records (OSR) be kept by schools for all students from grades JK-12. These records must be transferred when students change schools. However, consent of parents is required before a school can release the OSRs to a new school. Therefore, when a child is transferring from another school, consent will be required to have the records released to The Toronto Heschel School. Similarly, students transferring to another school

will require the written consent of parents/guardians to transfer the OSR to the new school. This includes students that graduate and move on to high school.

WRITTEN AND VERBAL REPORTS TO PARENTS

Complete written term reports are issued twice per year, in February and June. In addition, in November, parents will receive a mid-term progress report. At other times, 'Complementary Reports to Parents' notes to recognize student progress and 'Report to Parent' notes to record behaviour and/or academic deficiencies may be sent. Parent-Teacher conferences will be conducted in November and March. Upon request, consultation regarding student progress will also be available prior to the last reporting period.

XV. DRESS CODE

Clothing should be comfortable and easily washable. Please note that students in grades SK- 8 must wear The Toronto Heschel School Gym uniforms during Physical Education classes.

As primary role models, parents are requested to come to school attired appropriately for a religious educational institution.

The Dress Code of the School applies equally to boys and girls.

CLOTHING

The School is committed to creating a respectful and pluralistic learning environment. Guided by these principles, the following guidelines apply:

Please note that the final determination on appropriateness of the clothing in individual cases is at the discretion of the School.

Preschool - Grade 3

- No torn or tattered clothes.
- No emblem, slogan or picture of any profanity or disrespect toward any ethnic group or community may appear anywhere on the clothing. No pants with suggestive writing or inappropriate logos or slogans.
- No 'flip flop' shoes or shoes with wheels in them.

Grades 4 and Up

- No sleeveless shirts. Shoulders should be covered with at least a cap-sleeve. Necklines could be open to the collarbone.
- Tops must be long enough to be tucked in and must cover the entire midriff.
-
- Shorts and skirts should reach the child's knees. Leggings, skinny jeans and tights can ONLY be worn under loose-fitting skirts/tops that reach the child's knee. No pants with suggestive writing or inappropriate logos or slogans.
- No torn or tattered clothes.
- No emblem, slogan or picture of any profanity or disrespect toward any ethnic group or community may appear anywhere on the clothing.
- No 'flip flop' shoes or shoes with wheels in them.

B. HEADWEAR

It is the policy of the School that the children's heads should be covered at all times during class and all school outings. The following is a breakdown of this requirement school wide.

Preschool - Grade 3

The children will wear a kissuy (head covering) provided by the School at JK and again at grade 1. These kissuyim are decorated by the children as part of their Judaic curriculum.

Grades 4 – 5

The School will initially provide a Bukharian kissuy for all the students entering grade 4. These kissuyim are to be used for the duration of grades 4 and 5. Replacement for the lost or unusable Bukharian kissuy may be purchased for \$10 from the school office.

Grades 6 – 8

All students entering grade 6 will have a choice of the following

- Bukharian kissuy for both girls and boys
- School uniform kippah for boys
- School uniform kissuy for girls

The initial kissuy will be provided to the student and replacements are available from the school office at \$10 each. Replacement of lost or worn kissuy is the responsibility of the parent.

C. INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Students who arrive at school without appropriate clothing will not be permitted into the classroom. The school will attempt to provide temporary clothing, such as a t-shirt to wear over existing clothing. The student will be responsible for laundering and returning loaned clothing. When no appropriate clothing is available, or if the student has borrowed clothing more than two times per term, the office will contact parents to bring appropriate clothing to school. The student may not return to the class until the student is wearing clothing that conforms with the school policy.

D. FOOTWEAR

Shoes should provide proper foot and ankle support and be appropriate for age and season. Proper footwear is required for physical education and activities that take place in the gym. *Flip-flops are not permitted at any time.* For safety reasons, students are not permitted to wear backless shoes or shoes with wheels in them.

E. LOST AND FOUND

Throughout the year, clothing and personal items are turned in to the School's Lost and Found. Many of these cannot be returned because they lack proper identification. We recommend that parents attach name tags to all outer clothing as well as inside lunch boxes, on reusable water bottles and other personal items. If your child is missing a personal item, please check the Lost and Found. We suggest that valuables not be brought to school. Items not retrieved will regularly be given to the needy.

XVI. DEREKH ERETZ

At The Toronto Heschel School, we strive to balance the best interests of the individual with those of the class or school as a whole. Students are expected to respect themselves, their teachers and each other guided by Hillel's simple admonition: Do not do to others what is hateful to you. Because our arts-based multi-sensory programme increases attention and interest, we don't anticipate major behaviour problems at school. In the unlikely event that this occurs, our policy provides a framework for positive expectations, remediation and a predictable plan for disciplinary action while retaining flexibility and discretion, grounded in professional expertise and individual needs.

A., FOSTERING AN ATMOSPHERE OF CONSIDERATION AND RESPECT

The school is committed to fostering consideration and respect, good manners, self-discipline, honesty, trust, cooperation and helpfulness. This is the guiding principle for relationships between the school and parents as well as the relationship between the school and its students.

The homeroom and specialty teachers bear the frontline responsibility of nurturing these attributes through modeling and guidance. Where a student does not respond positively to the teacher's efforts, the teacher will formally notify an Administrator in a timely manner.

This may include situations such as:

- a student persistently behaving in a manner which interferes with the ability of other students to learn or the teacher's ability to lead or teach;
- a student acting in a manner which physically or emotionally endangers himself or herself or another person;
- a student acting in a manner injurious to the reputation or ethics of the school or community.

The Administrator will develop a plan for behaviour modification for the individual student and will consult the parents as to the progress and expectations of the plan. The process will be time limited and monitored by the teachers and the Administrator. A review and assessment schedule will be drawn so that all parties understand the consequences.

If the behaviour modification plan does not achieve the desired results, then the Principal, on the basis of professional expertise and discretion, may choose one or more of the following options: a probationary period, a behavioural contract, suspension, refusal to re-enroll or expulsion.

Before taking the step of permanent expulsion, the Principal will present the matter to the Board of Directors and request that an ad hoc sub-committee be especially constituted. The Principal will then seek ratification of the decision to expel by that sub-committee. If the decision to expel is ratified, the parent of the child involved may appeal to the Co-Chairs of the Board for reconsideration. The decision of the Co-Chairs of the Board will be final.

B. ADULT MODELLING OF SCHOOL VALUES

Consistent with the school's philosophy of fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect, it is understood that all adults visiting the school premises will behave in a manner that is consistent with the school's values. Parents and visitors to the school should know that discretionary power is invested in the Head of School to prohibit a person from entering or remaining on school premises if his or her presence is detrimental to the safety or well-being of any person on the premises, in the judgement of the Principal.

C. SOCIAL INCLUSION

The community of The Toronto Heschel School shares a commitment to eradicating bullying and educating students in social inclusion.

The Toronto Heschel School is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment, free from bullying behaviour. Jewish ethical principles provide a framework for healthy relationship building within the school community. Our objective is to work together to resolve conflict peacefully, be inclusive and respect differences. Every member of The Heschel community (student, teacher, staff, volunteer and parent) is entitled to their personal dignity, and entitled to participate in our school community without fear for their safety or for the integrity of their personal space, physically or emotionally.

Jewishly, there is really no such concept as 'innocent bystander.' The Torah, Leviticus 19:16 states, *Lo ta'amod al dam re'eakha*, 'You shall not stand aside while your fellow's blood is shed.' At our school, one who witnesses an act of bullying is as obliged to take action as one to whom the act is directed.

The Toronto Heschel School's policy is to address bullying situations quickly, efficiently and sensitively. All members of the Toronto Heschel School community need to be aware that our bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a relationship problem in which an individual or group uses power aggressively to cause distress to another. Bullying means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act which:

- is severe, persistent, or pervasive such that it contributes to an intimidating or threatening educational environment, or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's education, or
- physically or emotionally harms another individual or his/her property

Bullying can occur through numerous types of behaviour which jeopardize the emotional and or physical safety of the victim. Some examples of bullying behaviour are:

- abusive comments
- name calling
- insults and put downs
- social exclusion
- intimidating behaviour
- threatening behaviour
- physical or violent behaviour

Bullying is not confined to the school environment. It occurs anywhere where children congregate; on the playground, in parks, on the bus, or in cyberspace. Neither is bullying confined to relationships between students. There have been situations where teachers feel bullied by parents and situations where students feel bullied by teachers. All incidents of bullying are considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated by The Toronto Heschel School.

What is Cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is an emerging and very powerful form of bullying. Examples of cyber-bullying include

- threatening text messages
- the creation of mean-spirited websites
- spamming victims, using e-mail to spread malicious messages.

All members of the Toronto Heschel School community need to be aware that the school bullying policy extends to incidents of bullying which occur between Heschel students which may or may not occur on school premises due to the impact on the students' educational environment and experience.

Reporting and dealing with an incident of bullying:

Building a positive and safe learning environment requires the partnership of school administration, teachers, parents and students. The Toronto Heschel School is committed to dealing with bullying situations assertively, promptly and effectively.

- Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to immediately report incidents of bullying to the classroom teacher. If the teacher feels that it is an issue beyond his/her particular class then it will be reported to the Division Head. If a child or parent feels that the teacher is bullying the student then it should go directly to the Division Head.
- In response to the disclosure, a process will be established which will include working with the victim, the bully, and bystanders to resolve the situation, separately and, in some cases, together. The focus is on restoration of a positive, pro-social learning environment.
- Once a report of bullying has been made to a teacher, a thorough investigation will be conducted – including independent discussions with the victim, the bully, any bystanders and parents.
- These interviews will be documented. This documentation will be sent to the Division Head.
- An intervention strategy will be suggested and implemented which will include intervention with the bully, the victim and, in some cases, larger groups of students.
- If the situation is not resolved or ongoing, a meeting will be held - participants may include parents, teachers, students and members of the school's administration.
- A plan for intervention, ongoing monitoring, and follow-up will be decided at that meeting and documented. The Toronto Heschel School may consult with other sources included legal counsel, the police, Jewish Family and Child Services etc.

As part of the overall strategy against bullying, The Toronto Heschel School is committed to implementing preventative strategies such as using classroom curriculum to discuss issues as well as ongoing social inclusion education programmes in the classrooms and professional development for staff, utilizing peacemaking programs in the playground and ensuring adequate adult supervision and intervention particularly during structured activities.

D: DEREKH ERETZ FOR BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND OTHER OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL EVENTS

From time to time we are asked questions about events involving our community that happen outside the school; questions such as, "What is the school policy on birthdays on Shabbat?" or, "Do I need to serve kosher food at play-dates," or, "What about inviting the whole class to the Science Centre over Sukkot (or any Jewish holiday)." Within the school, our policies on such matters are guided by the principle of inclusion: we aim to ensure that all members of the community are respected and included, and we make sure not to exclude families because of their Jewish practice.

When it comes to events outside the school we do not and cannot formulate a policy. Instead, we ask that families help build the caring and inclusive community that is a hallmark of Heschel. Birthday parties, play dates, and other events that include Heschel students are important because they are core moments for building community and Derekh Eretz. When choosing the timing of

events, whom to invite, or what food to serve, we are making a decision not only about our own personal choices and preferences, but also about our community. One might ask, "Can't I have a birthday party on Shabbat since I asked the parents of the kids who are invited and it's okay with them?" Although this seems like it might be a good solution, there are a couple of potential concerns with this approach: asking the question could easily put a person in an uncomfortable situation since the parent may not want his or her child to be excluded from a social event, moreover, someone who wasn't invited might easily think that they weren't invited because it wouldn't be possible for them to attend an event on Shabbat. The last thing we want is social groups forming in classrooms based on who can or cannot attend events for Jewish reasons.

Therefore, while the school does not formulate policy on such matters, we do recommend the following community building best-practices:

(1) Avoid birthday celebrations or class events on Shabbat or Chaggim. The likelihood of misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and community fracture simply isn't worth it.

(2) When planning snacks and meals, take care that your decisions don't inadvertently put another family in a difficult or uncomfortable position. This doesn't mean we should never speak to each other or ask each other about our practices. We encourage open dialogues among families with diverse practices. That is part of what our school is all about. It just means we should approach such conversations from the point of view of "hakhnasat orchim" - "the welcoming of guests," making people feel welcome. It's better to err on the safe side, than to make a guest feel uncomfortable.

(3) When considering whom to invite, try to be as inclusive as possible. If you can't invite the whole class, be thoughtful about feelings of exclusion. For instance, don't invite a significant number of the class, and exclude only a few.

There aren't hard and fast rules here, it's a matter of keeping community in mind.

Together we can all contribute to the joyful work of community building that is so important to all of us here at Heschel.

XVII. CODE OF ONLINE CONDUCT

This topic is included in the section on personal behaviour because the school's view of technology is as an enhancement of a person's ability to make a positive contribution to the worldtikun olam—in the broadest sense.

The Toronto Heschel School regulates access to and use of the electronic technology and computer network and is governed by principles consistent with the Jewish values expressed in the school's philosophy. These are values that include honesty, the individual's responsibility to the community, and the respectful treatment of every person, *derekh eretz*. Thus, electronic technology and computer network users are expected and required to avoid actions that are dishonest, unkind (such as personal attacks and invasion of privacy), invasive, illegal (such as harassment, identity theft, libel, slander, vandalism, theft, inappropriate access), or in other ways inappropriate. Users found in violation of these guidelines risk having their privileges revoked.

The Toronto Heschel School provides online systems and resources for use by employees and students. Online resources include all material that is accessed through a computer or telecommunications network.

Respecting the property of others includes intellectual property and the right of every individual to privacy and dignity in all realms of personal relationships, including electronic media. This policy is designed to outline the methods used to achieve this respect.

All policies, procedures, codes of behaviour and rules of The Toronto Heschel School apply to those using online systems and resources provided by or on behalf of the School. The "Code of Online Conduct" pertains to the use of online systems and resources. This Code has been prepared to protect the rights and safety of all.

The Toronto Heschel School takes appropriate measures to ensure the security of the facilities and information that may be contained in them. The School reserves the right to monitor the use of online resources by all that access the systems.

USE OF ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY

Students using school computers must be familiar with the 'Computer User Code' as circulated to students. All students using computers will be required to complete and sign a 'Computer Use Form' which must be countersigned by a parent or guardian. This form will be placed in the student's personal file. Use of any school computer will signify acceptance of the relevant rules.

ONLY STUDENTS WITH IEPs (Independent Educational Plan) THAT SUGGEST THE USAGE OF COMPUTERS IN CLASS MAY BRING COMPUTERS TO SCHOOL. THE SAFEKEEPING OF THESE COMPUTERS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT.

PERSONAL SAFETY RULES

- Never reveal information about personal identity (such as name, address, phone number, age, physical description or school) to strangers who may be encountered online. Likewise, it is not appropriate to reveal such information in a public online forum where the identity of everyone seeing it may not be known.
- Never reveal personal information online about someone else without prior permission and it can be determined before posting that the information will not be used for harmful purposes.
- Never reveal personal access password or that of anyone else.
- Never send a personal picture of yourself, another person or a group over an electronic network without prior informed permission of all the individuals involved and, in the case of minors, their parents or guardians.
- Report immediately to a teacher or school administrator any message or request that may be received this is suggestive, invasive, troublesome or suggestive of personal contact..
- Never publish the specific dates, times and locations of field trips to people who are not directly entitled to such information or to public forums where unknown persons might access the information.

UNACCEPTABLE WEBSITES AND MATERIALS

- On a global network such as the Internet it is impossible to effectively control the content of the information. On occasion, users of online systems may encounter material that is controversial and which other users, parents or staff might consider inappropriate or offensive. It is the responsibility of the individual user not to intentionally access such material. If such material is accessed by accident, the incident must be reported immediately to a teacher or appropriate authority.
- The Toronto Heschel School is committed to meeting obligations under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code by providing safe schools and workplaces that respect the rights of every individual. Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated. It is not acceptable to use online systems to knowingly access sites, which contain material of a discriminatory or harassing nature.
- Users of the School's Online systems will not knowingly access, upload, download, store, display, distribute or publish any information that:
 - is illegal or that advocates illegal acts or facilitates unlawful activity;
 - threatens or intimidates any person or suggests violence, hatred or discrimination toward other people;
 - uses inappropriate and/or abusive language or conduct;
 - contains inappropriate religious or political messages;
 - violates or infringes the rights of any other person according to the Toronto Heschel School policies, Ministry of Education policies, the Ontario Human Rights Code, or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
 - is racially, culturally or religiously offensive;
 - encourages the use of controlled substances, participation in an illegal act or uses the system to incite criminal actions;
 - is of a defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, pornographic or sexually explicit nature;
 - contains personal information, images, or signatures of individuals without their prior informed consent;
 - constitutes messages of sexual harassment or which contains inappropriate romantic overtones;
 - solicits any users on behalf of any business or commercial organization without appropriate authorization;
 - supports bulk mail, junk mail or "spamming";
 - propagates chain letters, or other e-mail debris;
 - attempts to hide, disguise or misrepresent the identity of the sender.

PROHIBITED USES AND ACTIVITIES

All users of The Toronto Heschel School's On-Line systems will not do the following:

- Copy, download, install or run viruses or other inappropriate or unauthorized materials such as games, files, scripts, fonts, or dynamic link libraries (DLL's) from any source.
- Cause damage to any computer(s) and/or equipment including, but not limited to computer hardware, furniture, projectors, connectors, keyboards, storage devices (e.g. disk drives), and pointing devices (e.g. mice).
- Damage or erase files or information belonging to any person without authorization.
- Use any other person's account on the system.
- Cause any user to lose access to the system - for example, by disabling accounts or changing passwords without authorization.

- Open a computer case, move a computer, tamper with computer cables or connections without proper authorization.
- Attach unauthorized devices to a computer or network. Such devices include but are not limited to portable computers, disk drives, protocol analyzers, and other electronic or mechanical devices. Move, copy, or modify any of the system files or settings on any computer, server or other device without proper authorization.
- Compromise themselves or others by unauthorized copying of information, work or software belonging to others, encouraging others to abuse the computers or network, displaying, transferring or sharing inappropriate materials. Software pirating and unauthorized copying of material belonging to others is regarded as theft.
- Copy, transfer or use files, programs or any other information belonging to the The Toronto Heschel School for any reason whatever unless the licensing specifically permits such actions.
- Attempt to subvert The Toronto Heschel School networks by breaching security measures, hacking accessing records without authorization or any other type of disruption.
- Take the ideas, writings or images of others and present them as if they were yours. Under copyright laws, all information remains the property of the creator(s)/author(s) and therefore permission is required for its use. The use of copyright materials without permission can result in legal action.
- Enter the computer lab without direct supervision of a teacher or enter the lab with food or drink.

CONSEQUENCES

Inappropriate use of online access by students and staff could result in disciplinary action that may include legal action and/or involvement of police.

ONLINE PUBLISHING

Information published on the Internet or Intranet can reach millions of people who are mostly unknown to the original publishers. For this reason, it is important to regulate information that is published through the facilities of The Toronto Heschel School.

- The electronic publication of information using the facilities of The Toronto Heschel School is subject to all The Toronto Heschel School policies and guidelines.
- Links from a Toronto Heschel School site to outside sites must be carefully selected and are subject to the same standards of content quality as school sites.
- A means of contacting the publisher of any collection of information (such as a Web site) must be clearly identified on the opening screen of the collection.
- The information published on-line must be kept current and accurate with no conscious attempt to mislead the reader.
- Personal information such as personal addresses, phone numbers, individual or group pictures, or signatures cannot be published without express informed permission according to The Toronto Heschel School procedures.
- For the safety of our students, schools or departments must NOT publish specific dates, times and locations of future field trips.
- The appropriate school or department administrator is responsible for ensuring that all work published is original or has been cleared for copyright with the originator and ownership of the copyright is clearly indicated.
- Advertising on any The Toronto Heschel School related electronic publication is subject to the approval of the appropriate supervisory officer.
- All Web pages posted to the Internet must be linked to the official central site of the Toronto Heschel School.
- All Web pages hosted on the The Toronto Heschel School corporate site or paid for by The Toronto Heschel School are considered property of The Toronto Heschel School.

LIABILITY

The Toronto Heschel School makes no warranties of any nature or kind, expressed or implied, regarding its online services or resources, the continued operation of these services, the equipment and facilities used and their capacities, or the suitability, operability and safety of any program or file posted on The Toronto Heschel School systems for any intended purpose.

USE OF OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Although the school encourages the use of technology, there are times and places where limits must be established. *iPads, iPods, iPhones, Smartphones, Blackberrys and similar devices cannot be used during the school day. If brought to school they must be turned off and left in the student's school bag or locker.* In addition, the school may from time-to-time publish additional limits on the use of technology. At all times it should be remembered that personal electronic technology devices are expensive items and the school accepts no liability whatsoever for their damage or loss.

ABSOLUTELY NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED ON SCHOOL TRIPS.

XVIII. COMMUNICATIONS

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

A current e-mail address is requested for each family. This database will be used for official school communications. In keeping with the school's environmental ethos, where possible, electronic transmission will be the primary method of communication with students and parents. The confidentiality of the addresses, as well as other demographic and personal information will be protected and its contents will not be shared outside of the School Office.

The school maintains a website, www.torontoheschel.org where information about the school is available to the general public. The School calendar and forms sent to parents and will also be posted on our website and will be updated regularly. Please note that all time sensitive announcements and school closures will be communicated by email and posted on our website. In order to receive these notices in a timely manner please add "heschel@torontoheschel.org" to your safe address list. If you still encounter any delay in receiving our emails, please discuss the issue with your email service provider as our emails may be flagged as spam or junk email, due to the number of recipients, and prevented immediate delivery.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

Every Friday, during the school year, the school publishes a "Bulletin", which contains timely information for parents and the school community, and is distributed electronically. The purpose of the school Shabbat Shalom Newsletter is to keep The Toronto Heschel School community informed about the school's philosophy, activities and current events. While an effort is made to send home all notices on Fridays, urgent notices may be sent home on other days. The Shabbat Shalom Newsletter serves as a forum for announcing new policies and administrative procedures. The promotion of products or services is only permitted if they are specifically and directly sponsored by the school. The newsletter may carry messages of comfort or support to Heschel students, staff and their families in times of personal grief or celebration.

All material to be included in the school publications must be approved by the Principal.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

A directory of students will be compiled annually, including parents' names, addresses and telephone numbers. It will be distributed to parents and staff for school use only. It will carry a notice that it is a restricted document and is not to be used for any commercial or political purpose and is not to be distributed to the community at large. Parents may decline to publish their addresses, but parent names and one telephone number is required for publication.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

1. Times are scheduled for two formal parent-teacher conferences throughout the year. A third conference may be requested by either the teachers or the parents toward the end of the year.
2. Parents who wish to talk with teachers about student progress are strongly encouraged to contact the teacher via voice or e-mail. The method of teacher response is at the teacher's discretion. It is understood that a reasonable return time is within 24 hours on school days. Calls and messages are not expected to be returned on weekends or holidays.

3. When parents have concerns about their children, it is understood by all that the first approach must be directly to the homeroom teacher. This conversation should be at a mutually convenient time. At such a meeting, concerns and issues should be clearly expressed, with a follow-up written summary, if appropriate. Mutual respect should characterize any meeting between parents and teachers. Conversations about student progress held while passing in the school hallways, or during drop-off or dismissal times cannot merit the serious reflection that such discussions deserve. Only after determining that a meeting between parent and teacher has taken place can other school leaders become involved in the process.

BULLETIN BOARDS

The school's bulletin boards - real and virtual - are intended to present notices and information from the Board of Directors and the Administration. They may not be used to promote private businesses or opinions of school parents or the community at large. All material to be posted must first be initialed for approval by the Head of School or designate.

XIX. IN CONCLUSION

No manual can possibly include every behaviour, act and circumstance that can take place in a dynamic setting such as a school. For behaviours and situations not covered specifically by this handbook, let Jewish values and common sense be a guide. When in doubt, the appropriate school leaders should be consulted. In our school, the only bad question is the question not asked.

The Toronto
Heschel School



בית הספר
על שם השל

Inspiring Jewish Students to Make a Difference

819 Sheppard Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario
M3H 2T3

Phone: 416-635-1876
Fax: 416-635-1800

Email: info@torontoheschel.org
Website: www.torontoheschel.org

An Ontario Certified Gold EcoSchool





The Toronto
Heschel School



בית הספר
על שם השל

Inspiring Jewish Students to Make a Difference

Declaration of Understanding

Parents

I, _____ have read and understood the policies and procedures as outlined in the 2017-2018 Parent Handbook.

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Student (Grade 6-8)

I, _____ have read, understood and will follow the rules and regulations of The Toronto Heschel School as outlined in the 2017-2018 Parent Handbook.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Student (Grades 6-8)

I, _____ have read, understood and will follow the rules and regulations of The Toronto Heschel School as outlined in the 2017-2018 Parent Handbook.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

