

Handbook



2011-2012 School Year

Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center Calendar for 2011-2012 School Year



Wednesday and Thursday, August 17 & 18	Teacher Training, 9:00 a.m.
Friday, August 19	Parent/Child Orientation for Tov, Chaverim, and Shalom Classes
Monday, August 22	First day of school for Tov, Chaverim, and Shalom classes
Monday, August 22	Lunch Bunch and Afternoon Enrichment Begins
Monday, September 5	No School; Labor Day
Wednesday, September 28	Close at Noon No Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment
Thursday, September 29 and Friday, September 30	Rosh Hashanah; No School
Friday, October 7	Close at Noon No Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment
Saturday, October 8	Yom Kippur
Thursday, October 13	First Day of Sukkot; No School
Thursday, October 20	Simchat Torah; No School
Wednesday evening, October 26	Preschool Open House
Wednesday, November 16	Parent Conferences
Wed., Thurs., & Fri., November 23, 24, 25	Thanksgiving Vacation; No School
Tuesday, December 20	Light first Chanukah candle
Wednesday, December 21	All-school Chanukah Party Close at noon - no Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment
Thursday, Dec. 22 through Monday, January 2	Winter Vacation

2011-2012 Calendar Continued

Tuesday, January 3	School resumes
Monday, January 16	No School; Martin Luther King Day
Wednesday, February 8	Dad's Morning for Tov Class
Thursday, February 9	Dad's Night for Chaverim and Shalom Classes
Monday, February 20	No School; Presidents Day
Friday, March 16 through Friday, March 23	Spring Vacation
Monday, March 26	School resumes
Wednesday, March 28	Vision Screening
Friday, April 6	Close at noon No Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment First Seder - Passover begins at sundown
Friday, April 13	No School - Last day of Passover
Wednesday, April 18	Parent Conferences
Wednesday, May 2	Mom's Morning for Tov Class
Thursday, May 3	Mom's Night for Chaverim and Shalom Classes
Tuesday, May 15	Shalom Farewell Program
Wednesday, May 16	Picnic; last day of school
Thursday, May 17	Last day for teachers



WELCOME TO OUR PRESCHOOL!

Entering preschool is an exciting and significant experience. We hope you and your child will enjoy taking the steps to discover the world with the loving support and guidance of their teachers. We look forward to getting to know you and your child throughout the school year and you becoming a part of our preschool family and community.

The following material in this handbook is designed to provide you with important information about the policies and procedures of our program. Please read this handbook carefully, and keep it for reference throughout the year. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me in the school office, 314-434-3404, at any time.

Looking forward to sharing a wonderful year with you and your child,

Renee Kohn, Director

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

A child enters into the human race with an unlimited capacity for growth and an unquenchable desire to learn. It is the goal of the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center to stimulate the development of a creative, questioning, self-directing individual.

A Jewish child enters our Congregation with an unlimited arsenal of tools which can be used to help that child begin to develop a positive feeling toward a Jewish heritage. It is the goal of the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center to provide an atmosphere and specific activities which will nurture that affect. It is also the goal of the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center to reflect the warm feelings of this Congregation toward tradition and the basic assumptions of Reform Judaism as outlined by the Rabbis and the Board of Trustees.

The individual growth goals are as follows and should enable the child to:

1. Develop and maintain a positive self-image about his/her own abilities to create and to learn, concurrently working so that the child recognizes, in a positive manner, his position as a member of a core family and as a Jew in the community.
2. Expand awareness of the world around them through sensory experiences, which are prerequisites for developing concepts and solving problems.
3. Develop oral language skills of both English and Hebrew through listening, speaking, and dramatic play. Learn to express verbally and non-verbally feelings in appropriate ways. Hebrew prayers and words revolving around everyday objects should be considered part of the appropriate language skills.
4. Develop maximum physical growth and health through motor activities and proper nutrition. Basic Jewish foods will be introduced to the children through Jewish holiday celebrations, which will maximize the skills outlined in #1-#3.
5. Develop the ability to relate to peer group and others.
6. See himself/herself as part of larger Jewish tradition which has specific values that express respect and concern for the rights and property of others.
7. Become self-directing, with the ability to use self-discretion, an integral part of Reform Judaism, by providing the child with opportunities to explore, create, and make choices.

POLICIES

TUITION

Tuition is based upon the total number of sessions held from August 22 through May 16 (nine months). For your convenience, tuition is pro-rated into nine monthly payments.

WE DO NOT SEND MONTHLY STATEMENTS.

It is your responsibility to get your tuition payments into the Early Childhood Center office by the **FIRST OF EACH MONTH.** All checks should be made payable to United Hebrew Congregation. **If you mail your check, please include "School Office" on the envelope.** Online payment will be available for tuition and optional programs at United Hebrew's website, www.unitedhebrew.org. Automatic deduction from your checking account will also be available for tuition payment. There will be no refunds in the event of illness or vacation. In case of unusual situations, decisions will be made by the Administration.

2011-2012 TUITION SCHEDULE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
Tov (M,W,F)	225	260
Chaverim (M-F)	300	350
Shalom (M-F)	300	350

LATE TUITION POLICY

It is the policy of the Early Childhood Center Board that should a family be two months behind in tuition payments, a certified letter will be sent giving the family two weeks to either become current in their payments or to make arrangements with the school director and/or temple administrator.

If neither of these conditions is met after a two-week period, the child will be dropped from enrollment until tuition is paid in full.

THERE WILL BE NO REFUND FOR DAYS MISSED:

- When the child is on vacation
- When the child is ill
- When school is canceled due to bad weather or acts of God

INJURIES

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety and well being of all children. However: Any serious illness or head injury will be reported to the parents immediately so that appropriate action may be taken.

If a major injury occurs, the staff will immediately call for professional help. Parents, designated emergency contacts, or the child's doctor will be notified immediately.

If an emergency is such that immediate transportation to the hospital is necessary, a staff member will accompany the child and will have on her person the emergency consent form signed by the parent.

SAFETY

Keeping each child safe is important to everyone in our preschool community. When your child is in our care, it is essential that we be able to do everything that we reasonably can to protect him or her. When necessary, the preschool administrators will use their sound discretion to make reasonable decisions regarding the safety and welfare of the children enrolled in our program, and, considering the circumstances, may not always be able to notify the parents.

In the event we must evacuate the building (fire, gas leak, etc.) in inclement weather, we will go as a group to the Centre at Conway, with whom we have a reciprocal agreement. The Centre at Conway is on the northwest corner of Woodsmill and Conway, where we will be housed until our building is deemed safe.
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ILLNESS

Your child's school attendance is very important. In order for him/her to benefit from the planned educational program, wellness is essential. When your child cannot participate fully, please do not send him/her to school. If a teacher determines that a child is ill, he/she is removed from the classroom and a parent or emergency contact is called.

When your child is absent from school, please call and let us know why. It can help us to alert other parents. An effective measure in preventing the spread of infectious disease is to keep your child home until there is no sign of illness or cold and there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. When a child's nose secretions are anything but clear, it is usually a sign of infection. Please check with your pediatrician before sending your child to school. Please keep your child at home if he/she has one of the following symptoms:

Fever	Extreme fatigue
Discomfort from pain	Swelling/redness of throat
Vomiting	Reddened, weeping eyes
Diarrhea	Constant sneezing/productive cough
Rash/skin eruptions	Any draining or infected sore
Head lice – must be treated and nit free	Persistent cough
Abnormal nasal drainage	Suspected communicable disease

If these symptoms are present while the child is in school, you will be requested to take him/her home. The telephone number(s) of a person who will have transportation in the event we are unable to reach you needs to be on file in the school office. We do not provide sick childcare nor do we have space or staff to isolate a sick child for more than a few minutes. Student may not return to school until he/she is free from all symptoms for a 24 hour period without fever-reducing medications.

Please remember that these policies and procedures are being applied to each family for the protection of each child's health. Every parent wants to minimize their child's exposure to contagious illness, and your cooperation in following the health policies of the early childhood center will assist our staff in this effort.

It is our policy not to administer any medication to children. In those rare cases where it is an absolute medical necessity, please contact the office for a release form to be completed by you and your doctor that we must keep on file.

ALLERGIES

All children with allergies severe enough to require intervention must notify us and complete the allergy specific forms that will then be sent to you.

CLOTHING

The proper dress for school (and we cannot emphasize this point enough) is **clothes suited for play**. This means clothes that can get dirty, that are comfortable and easy for the child to handle. Even with paint smocks on, accidents can and will happen! So please leave special outfits for occasions other than school time. Dress children for active play – thongs, sandals, and crocs do not provide enough security or protection when children are climbing or jumping. Children should wear **closed shoes** (sneakers are the best!). **ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

We will go outside for large muscle activities whenever the weather is not too severe. Be sure your child is adequately dressed so he/she may enjoy the outdoor activities. For safety purposes, we recommend that children not wear loose dangling items (long necklaces and long drawstrings on coats) that could get caught in playground equipment.

Please provide your child an extra set of clothing, appropriate to the season that can be kept at school. Be sure to put the child's name on all garments that are removable, as there will be many look-alikes.

OUTDOOR POLICY

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily routine. Children go outside if the temperature is above 32 degrees. Our staff follows recommended guidelines on extreme weather days and air quality alert days, which may restrict the amount of time the children are outdoors on those days.

All children benefit from outdoor play; therefore, we are unable to honor a request by a parent/guardian to keep the child inside for the entire day. A physician's statement is required if a child is to be kept inside because of health reasons.

WEATHER CLOSING POLICY

There are four ways to receive school-closing information due to bad weather (**we do not follow Parkway or Rockwood**):

If our school is closed for any reason, you will receive an automated phone message from Quick Contact Broadcasting Notification at your home between 7:00 and 7:15 that morning.

School closing will be shown or announced on KMOV Channel 4 television as "United Hebrew Preschool."

School closing will be announced on KMOX Radio 1120 AM in the preschool category as "United Hebrew Preschool."

School closing will be listed on the web at www.kmox.com as "United Hebrew Preschool."

COMMUNICATIONS

If at any time during the school year you have questions or wish to confer with the Director or a teacher, please call or send a note for an appointment so that we can arrange a time that is mutually agreeable.

Families are important partners in making the school year a wonderful experience. There are multiple opportunities for parental involvement, such as parent/child orientation, speakers, room parents, committees, library parents, Shabbat parents, and more. In addition, the preschool curriculum provides events of special interest to families, such as Dad's Night and Mom's Night, and United Hebrew and the Early Childhood Center sponsor frequent Friday evening Kiddie Kabbalat Shabbat services. **Check your email daily for important information**, and check your child's totebag daily for any last minute communications. We will also check your child's tote bag daily for communication from you to us!

Two individual conferences during the year will be arranged for parents and teachers to share the progress made over the year in all classes. Parents also receive weekly update emails and a monthly email school bulletin. Notes about upcoming events or programs will be emailed. If you wish to have a hard copy, please inform Nancy.

It is very important for parents to communicate any changes that may occur in your households. Children can act differently when company comes, when family members are out of town, when there is an illness in the family, a new baby, or any other type of unusual circumstance.

Copies of your child's developmental records, our voluntary accreditation materials and other records are available to parents in the school office.

When you have notes, checks, etc., to send us, please help us by pinning or taping them on the outside of your child's tote bag. If you wish to send an email for that day, please do so before 8:30 a.m. A large roomy tote bag or backpack that snaps or zips is very helpful. **It is helpful to purchase a totebag with only one zipper compartment so we can easily find notes.** Please mark your child's name on it clearly.

DISCIPLINE

At the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center, we acknowledge that the safety, welfare, and healthy development of our children are our primary concerns. Children are encouraged to solve their problems independently, with direction and encouragement from the staff when necessary.

With the assistance of their teachers, the children learn to use words rather than physical contact to settle disputes. We encourage and acknowledge positive and acceptable behavior. High standards of appropriate behavior are set while allowing the children many choices and freedom of movement. We are consistent in our rules and expectations.

Should inappropriate behavior occur on the part of an individual or group, the behavior and its consequences are discussed, and children are often redirected to other play situations. "Time-outs" may be used if other measures fail. Verbal praise and other positive reinforcement are an important part of our program, as are the respect and dignity of each individual child.

TERMINATION PROCEDURES

In rare cases, the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center may need to discontinue a child's participation in our program. Without limitation, reasons for this include: a poor fit between our program and a child's specialized educational or behavioral needs; parental unwillingness to cooperate with the policies, procedures or decisions of the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center; and other issues that the Saul Spielberg Early Childhood Center finds disruptive to the harmonious operation of the center.

PERSONAL ITEMS

The classrooms are adequately equipped with toys, games, and materials of special interest to young children. **Personal toys should be left at home.** It is difficult to be responsible for personal play items, as they can be easily damaged or misplaced at school.

At various times during the year, your child will have the opportunity to bring a special personal item for sharing.

SNACK

A mid-morning snack will be provided each day by our parents. Each child will bring home an individualized "Snack Calendar" provided by his/her classroom teachers to inform you of when it is your turn. All snacks served during the school day **should be store bought and nut free.** A list of suggested appropriate nutritious snacks is listed below. **Please stay away from cupcakes, donuts and cookies with frosting and/or chocolate except for special occasions.** Specific details will be sent home with students the first week of school. Each class will receive its own specific list of suggested snacks and those snacks not permitted due to allergies.

General Guidelines

Fruits and vegetables

Yogurt

Commercially canned fruits

Bagels and cream cheese

Crackers, cheese, cereal (with or without milk)

Please check labels – no nuts, peanuts, or overt nut or peanut products as stated on product labels will be served. Please keep all snacks in original wrappers.

In order to comply with legislation passed by the Missouri Department of Health regarding communicable diseases, we must adhere to the following policy: *All food sent from home to be served to the children for snack, birthday treats, etc., must be either baked and boxed by a commercial bakery or purchased commercially prepackaged (such as Hostess or Little Debbie treats).* Uncut fruit is acceptable and will be washed and cut here at school. Further details will be sent to children in each individual class.

CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are important milestones for young children. When your child is having a birthday, your monthly snack day will be scheduled on or near that day. The school will send out invitations through backpacks only when the entire class is invited to a birthday party. Any other communications going into backpacks must be approved by the school director.

Holidays: We have a wonderful time celebrating the Jewish holidays and appropriate secular holidays. **But our curriculum does not include Halloween or Valentine's Day.**

Shabbat: Every Friday we celebrate Shabbat in the classrooms and as a group at music. Each family will have a turn to serve as the "Shabbat family of the week" and take home our special Shabbat basket. You'll be notified about this at a later date.

We ask each child to bring a box or can of food each Friday, which is donated to the Jewish Food Pantry.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information which concerns a preschool child's physical, emotional, intellectual, and/or social welfare may be shared with school staff who are involved with your child.

Written approval from the custodial parent or guardian will be required before any information will be shared with any other professional working with your child.

CARPOOL INFORMATION – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Carpool is a very important part of our morning. Please remember that **SAFETY, NOT SPEED**, is our foremost concern. To put so many children safely in so many cars can take some time. **It is very helpful to us (and convenient for you) if our families carpool together. We will be happy to help you find families in your neighborhood.**

Whether or not you are participating in a carpool, you must complete a carpool form to receive a carpool number. You will receive your carpool number at orientation. Be sure the number is facing out (in the windshield) whenever you are picking up the children. If someone else is picking up your child, it would be helpful if they have a number. Carpool drop off and pick up will be on the school side of the building.

The procedure for dropping off children is to pull up to the overhang by the steps. Carpool will start at 9:00, when a staff member will open the car door and let the children out. Please be prompt so your child doesn't miss any of the fun. An adult will greet the children at the door, and they will walk down the hall to their rooms (staff members will be assisting children if needed). Should you arrive after the teacher on duty has finished opening the car doors, it is your responsibility to walk the children to their classes. **Please park your car in the parking lot.**

Procedure for picking up children is to pull up at 12:00 and wait until a staff member comes out to your car. We will open the door and help the kids in. Children will be waiting in the lobby with their teachers. Please pull up to the far side of the circle to buckle your children into their seat belts.

If a parent needs to come into the building, please drop the children off, then park and come in the school doors. **Please do not park in the circle.** The circle has been declared a fire zone by the Chesterfield Fire Protection District and must be kept open for emergency vehicles at all times. You will be asked to move your car if it is left in the circle unattended.

It is very important that each child is seat belted. After the children are loaded into your car, please pull to the far end of the circle or the parking lot to fasten seat belts.

We will not release a child to anyone other than a parent or carpool without a written note or phone call from the parent. This includes occasions when your child may go home with a friend in a different carpool. Be sure to notify the driver of your carpool when this occurs. If your child will be arriving late, or leaving early, please notify the office. **Car seats left here for another driver picking up your child must be labeled with your child's name.**

REMEMBER, ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING IN THE CIRCLE AT ANY TIME!

You will receive detailed carpool information on orientation day.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All required records regarding our regulations, teachers' qualifications, children's developmental records, accreditation information, etc., are kept in the school office.

Our families are important partners in the education of our students. It is very important to us that each of you feels that you are an important part of our preschool family. If we can help you in any way at all, please don't hesitate to call us. The phone number of the school office is 314-434-3404.

OPTIONS

Two easy steps to sign up:

Sign up by the Thursday before by using our weekly optional program calendar.

Send cash or check, or pay online!

Early Bird - Every morning, 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. **Cost: \$5.00 per morning** for arrival anytime between 8:30 and the beginning of carpool. Walk your child to the office for check in. Call the office if you need this service before 8:30 a.m.

Lunch Bunch - Monday through Friday 12:00 until 1:00. Children bring lunch* and have a supervised play period. Children need not be potty trained. **Cost: \$10 per day (\$5 for second child in same family).**

Enrichment 101 - Monday through Friday from 12:00 until 3:00. The children enjoy free play and lunch* brought from home, followed by a rotation of activities each week. **Cost: \$20 per day (\$10 for second child in same family).**

Kids Day Out babysitting - **Thursday** mornings from 9:00 - 12:00 for children at least seven months. Your child will be cared for in a safe, nurturing environment. Fun age-appropriate activities included. A minimum of three children must be signed up. **Cost: \$18 per morning.**

Temple Tots - NEW THIS YEAR! **FREE** playgroup program for children up to age 3 and a parent, grandparent, or caretaker. **Tuesday** mornings from 10 - 11:30. Starting September 6.

***Lunches may not contain peanut butter or any nut products.**