



Parent Handbook

2011-2012

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This document can also be found online at www.hobokensynagogue.org

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS.

The Kaplan Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

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Philosophy

The United Synagogue of Hoboken offers a unique program of early childhood education. Complementing a developmental secular curriculum, the Jewish curriculum celebrates Shabbat and the beauty of the Jewish experience.

Through the Jewish Curriculum Children:

- Live the Jewish calendar through Shabbat and holiday activities and celebrations
- Learn select Hebrew words
- Discover Jewish values in a school setting
- Gain a sense of spirituality and gratitude
- Participate in an environment that is conducive to Jewish observance
- Become involved with the Jewish community

The Kaplan Cooperative Preschool strives to help each child develop a healthy lifelong curiosity about all learning. We focus on each child's developmental needs and promote a positive, secure and accepting environment, enabling each child to grow with a sense of joy and wonderment. Children are encouraged to explore at their own pace in our nurturing, stress-free, stimulating classrooms. Classrooms are designed with a variety of learning centers, each with a hierarchy of materials. These areas include fine and gross motor, language, math, science, imaginative play, and creative arts.

In every way, from our curriculum to our teaching staff, our preschool promotes in our children a positive self-image and self-confidence. Children learn responsibility for their actions and for themselves, as well as the social skills that foster care and consideration for their peers and all people.

Our early childhood program stresses:

- Safety
- Jewish values
- Parental involvement
- A loving, nurturing environment
- School as a fun place
- Community
- Friendship
- Exploring the world
- Thematic, child-centered, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Experiential, hands-on learning
- Close bonds between teachers, parents, and friends

Preschool Ages and Hours

The Kaplan Cooperative Preschool is a Jewish school open to children of all religions. The school is licensed by the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services, to serve children 2 ½ to 6 years of age. School is in session Monday through Friday from 8:00 am-6:00 pm. All morning students have the option of participating in our enrichment program, which meets from 12 noon to 3:00 pm, and in our after-care program from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. Afternoon students have the option of participating in our after-care program from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. The school follows an academic calendar. We meet from September to June. Each class has a Head Teacher and an Assistant Teacher. There are 8 classes for the 2009-2010 school year:

9:00-12:00 KAPLAN PRESCHOOL CLASSES

- **Two 4's Classes (Dubim and Susim)**
 - students attend a minimum of 5 mornings a week
- **Two 3's Classes (Dagim and Kofim)**
 - students can attend 3,4 or 5 mornings a week
- **2 ½ Class (Goorim)**
 - students can attend 2,3,4 or 5 mornings a week

12:30-3:00 KAPLAN PRESCHOOL CLASSES

- **MWF 2 ½ Class (MishMish Gadol)**
 - students attend 3 afternoons a week
- **TTh 2 ½ Class (MishMish Katan)**
 - students attend 2 afternoons a week

12:30-3:30 KAPLAN PRESCHOOL CLASS

- **3's Class (Tutim)**
 - students can attend 3,4 or 5 afternoons a week

Children may increase the number of days they attend school at any time during the school year if there is space in the class. Discuss this with the Director if you are interested in changing the days/times your child attends school. **There are no make up days.**

Summer Camp

We have a summer camp in July and August. The camp meets Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 3:00 pm. The camp admission priority is: current Kaplan students, students who have been accepted for admission the following September, past Kaplan students and siblings, **and** children in the general community.

Add-on Programs

Children can attend the early drop-off, afternoon enrichment or after-care program at any time during the school year.

Early Drop-off

We offer early drop-off from 8:00 to 9:00 am. Families can sign up in advance or pay by the day. The fee is \$5.00 per day. The early drop-off is in the 3rd floor classroom. Students should be brought upstairs to this classroom. They can bring a dairy breakfast. At 9:00 the students are walked to their classroom.

Afternoon Kaplan Enrichment Program 12:00-3:00 pm

The school offers an enrichment program Monday through Friday from 12 noon to 3:00 pm. The program is open to all enrolled morning students.

- You can enroll your child in any number of enrichment days
- You must pay for the entire time (12:00-3:00). You can pick your child up before 3:00 if you choose.
- You can enroll your child in the enrichment program at any time during the school year. If you decide to add a day, your fee will be prorated.
- Students can attend our afternoon enrichment program on a per day basis for a fee of \$30.00 per afternoon. We recommend that your child ease into the full day—first day lunch only, and second day lunch and rest time. If your child has adjusted to this schedule, he/she may stay for the entire 3 hours. If your child is staying for the afternoon, you should bring his/her dairy, peanut-free lunch to school in the morning, and tell the school at sign in that your child is staying.
- Families can purchase an afternoon enrichment 10-Pack for \$275, which pays for 10 afternoon enrichment sessions.
- This is a multi-age program. All the students from each class who are staying join together to make new groups during the afternoon. This is a great opportunity for your child to meet other students in the school and work with different teachers. Depending on the numbers we usually meet in the second floor classrooms.
- Children are asked to bring a healthy, dairy, peanut free lunch. Lunches are refrigerated. We have a microwave to heat up food. Pasta, yogurt, pizza and bagels are favorites. Soy butter, soy products, cereal and milk, vegetarian soup, tuna, cheese and crackers, hummus, granola bars, are other examples of popular lunches. After lunch is a 30-minute quiet time. The school provides resting mats. The students are

asked to lie quietly on their mats during rest time. After rest time, the children will participate in additional curriculum and enrichment activities. If time and weather allow, there will be an additional outside play time.

- Examples of afternoon enrichment activities are:
 - Music
 - Art
 - Yoga
 - Science
 - Cooking
 - Games
 - Creative Dramatics

Sample Afternoon enrichment schedule:

12:00-12:30	Transition and outside play
12:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:30	Quiet rest
1:30-2:30	Activity
2:30-3:00	Pack up/Outside play

Napping Room

We have a napping room option in the afternoon enrichment program. They nap for one hour. Only children whose parents request the napping room will have a nap. You can make an ongoing request for the napping room or a day-to-day request.

After-care 3:00-6:00 pm (better known as “the Fun Room”)

Any Kaplan student can use the after-care program on a regular or day-to-day basis. If you want your child to stay past 3:00, notify the office at drop off. If you are late picking up your child, he/she will be brought to the after-care room. The cost is \$10.00 per hour or part of an hour. Families are asked to pay each time they use the program. This program operates Monday through Thursday.

Arrival Procedures

Morning - It is important to arrive at the school between 9:00 and 9:15 am each school morning. **The Kaplan Classrooms are open at 8:55 am.** Make sure there is a teacher in the room before you leave your child. If you need to drop your child off to his/her regular classroom any time before 9:00 am you are welcome to use the early drop-off program. Please pay your \$5.00 payment at the office each day you use the early drop-off.

Afternoon - It is important to arrive at the school between 12:30 and 12:45 am each school afternoon. **The Kaplan Classrooms are open at 12:25 am.** Make sure there is a teacher in the room before you leave your child.

For safety reasons everyone must sign his or her child in and out each day. A Kaplan employee is posted at the front door at drop-off /pick-up time. If you come after school begins or are picking up early, we ask that you stop in at the office and let us know you are dropping off/picking up your child.

Drop-Off

It is very important that you follow these drop-off procedures out of respect for our neighbors on Park Avenue and for safety reasons—emergency vehicles must be able to easily pass by the building.

- DO NOT PARK DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE SYNAGOGUE OR SCHOOL. THESE SPACES BLOCK DRIVEWAYS.
- At all times: LEAVE ROOM FOR AN EMERGENCY VEHICLE TO PASS.
- There is no double parking in front of the synagogue or school building along Park Avenue.

Options

- Walk your child to school and into his/her classroom
- If you are driving to school, either:
 - pull into one of the spaces in front of the school, on the yellow line area, and walk your child into his/her classroom. When pulling into one of these spaces, remember to leave room for other cars. If you will be longer than a few minutes, find a legal parking space.
 - Find a legal parking space around the school area—there are meters on First Street.
 - **QUICK DROP-OFF OPTION** - Kaplan Teachers will meet your child by your car in front of the synagogue building and escort your child into the building and classroom
 - This will only be available to your family once your child is adjusted to school and for 15 minutes: **9:00-9:15 AM.**
 - If a child refuses to leave the car with a teacher, the parent will have to re-park the car and walk the child into the building
 - When you drive up to the school, pull in front of the synagogue building. When it is your turn to let your child out, pull your car up to the teacher, shut off your car motor and unbuckle your child's seat belt. The teachers will not unbuckle the car seat or approach your car with the motor running.
 - If you need to convey any information to the classroom teacher, write a note for the teacher.

If you are running late, please do not enter the classroom once the meeting time has begun. Most morning meetings will begin at 9:15 am; most afternoon meetings begin at 12:45 pm. Please wait in the hall until meeting is over. It is very disruptive to enter the classroom once meeting has begun. Please respect the teachers and other students and wait quietly out in the hall.

If your child is going to be late or absent for the day, please call the school and notify us with the reason.

Dismissal Procedures

Class is dismissed at 12 noon and again at 3:00 or 3:30 pm. If you need to pick your child up early, please notify the teacher during drop-off. Children will only be released to their parents or authorized individuals as directed in writing by their parents. If someone other than an individual listed on your dismissal form is picking up your child, please send your teacher a note with the name of the person and telephone number.

All children must be picked up from inside the school. If you are having trouble finding a parking space or you have a sleeping baby in the car, please call the office and we will walk your child to your car. Remember there is no double parking around the school.

As per State policy on the Release of Children, if a student is not picked up by an authorized individual and staff members have attempted to contact those individuals authorized by the parents and an hour has passed, the preschool can call the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent is able to pick-up the child. Parents who are chronically late in picking up their child may be fined. *Children do not like being the last one picked up at school.*

School Policies

Birthday Celebrations

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthdays during snack time. Parents may provide a celebration snack (cupcakes, cookies, etc.) but no favors or other party items may be brought in. Family members may join the class and the birthday child can select a favorite book for their special guest to read to the class. The teacher should be notified of your intentions a few days prior to the event. All food must be purchased at a synagogue-approved bakery or must have a “U” or “K” marking if purchased in a supermarket. Because of Kosher food regulations, items baked at home are not permitted.

If the entire class is being invited, you can distribute invitations for birthday parties in the class mailboxes or use the class e-groups.

Clothing

Please dress your child in play clothes and sneakers or other rubber-soled shoes. We will be using paints, glue and other “messy” materials on a daily basis, so please do not send your child to school in “good” clothes. Children should be comfortable with their clothing: not too loose or too restrictive.

All clothing should be labeled. Each child will need a shoe box with the child’s name on it filled with a seasonally-appropriate complete change of clothing. This includes underwear, shoes and socks. This box will remain at the school. Please remember to change it as your child grows and the seasons change. If your child wears diapers or pull ups, you will need to supply the school with some.

We will take the children outside to play every day, even in the winter. Your child should come to school in the winter with a hat and gloves, boots and warm jacket. Come to school prepared for the weather. Outside play is an integral part of our program.

Conferences

A Parent/Teacher conference is scheduled in November. This is the time for you to fully discuss your child’s progress in school. Any questions or concerns you have should be presented to the teacher at this time. However, you can always feel free to contact the teacher at any time and request time to meet. Please understand that the teacher is not available to meet with you when class is in session. Teachers are unable to confer during arrival and dismissal time. If you have something to share with the teacher during those times a note is best. She will contact you after school hours. **Teachers can be called at home after 9 am and up to 9:00 pm.** Don't hesitate to call with questions you have about your child, the curriculum or general early childhood development questions.

Parents are encouraged to speak with their child’s teacher often and share concerns and questions. This can be done in person, via telephone calls, e-mail or through written correspondence.

A written report is mailed home in the spring. End-of-year conferences are optional.

Discipline Policy

The State of New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services requires that we provide a brief explanation of our philosophy of discipline. This explanation is signed by all parents and kept in your file at school. This policy is to aid in your child's social/emotional growth. All the teachers at Kaplan have training in Early Childhood Education and developmentally appropriate practices.

It is our philosophy that discipline is not punishment. At all times we strive to teach our students to make positive social choices that help them become dynamic members of our community. We work on skills that support the development of positive self-esteem, good communication skills and self-discipline. We always expect kindness and consideration for others and want to instill pride and good feelings in every child.

Our rules are simple and easy to follow. Below are the usual steps we take to discipline a child but since every child is different we may choose to change our responses in order to suit your child's needs, this will happen at the teacher's discretion and in an age appropriate way.

Step 1: A teacher will point out the behavior that is disruptive and then suggest to the child "make another choice." The teacher will also help the child to redirect him or herself.

Step 2: If the behavior continues, the teacher will explain to the child the effect that his behavior is having on the other community members. S/he will be helped to "make another choice" or redirected.

Step 3: The child may be asked to sit out or be removed from the situation. The child will sit briefly by him/herself, and the teacher and child will discuss the behavior. This is the time for the child to recognize why the choice he/she made was not a positive one. The teacher will ask the child if he is ready to rejoin the group. At this point the choice is up to the child to join the group. The purpose of this is for the child to be able to recognize when he or she has regained self control and is ready to rejoin the group.

The other objective for a child to sit briefly alone is for him/her to observe children and adults interacting in positive ways or to "pull himself together."

Emergencies at School

Parents sign a medical release form allowing the Preschool to seek emergency medical care for any enrolled child. In the event of an emergency, the Director, or her designee, will take immediate action to get medical attention for your child. We will then contact you or your authorized emergency contact.

We might attempt to contact your pediatrician, if time allows; otherwise prompt medical attention will be secured for your child at Hoboken University Hospital or through the Center of Family Health at 122-32 Clinton Street, Hoboken. 201 418-3110.

If there is an emergency situation concerning the school or the synagogue building, the teachers will walk the children to Hoboken Dance Academy at 230 Willow Avenue. We will hang a sign on the school entrance door. We will also attempt to contact the families by telephone.

Expulsion Policy

The Expulsion Policy detailed and signed in your Student Contract states
The Board of Trustees of the Synagogue may terminate this contract upon written notice in the event of any of the following events:

- A. The Faculty recommends that your child be withdrawn; or*
- B. The parent(s) or guardian(s) do not fulfill all their duties; or*
- C. Any tuition payment is unpaid for thirty (30) days following the due date.*

It is our goal to always work and support the families in our community. Our program strives to meet the needs of all our students. In rare circumstances this is not possible. In the event a child is struggling in the class we would proceed as follows:

1. Meet with parents
2. Create and enact a plan for support
3. Have a meeting with parents to review the plan
4. Continue attempts to build in support with revised plan
5. Conduct a Placement meeting to discuss appropriate programs

Immediate expulsion could be warranted by safety concerns or potentially dangerous behavior conducted by a student or parent.

We will not expel a child based solely on the child's parent making a complaint to the Bureau of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing regulations or questioning a center directly regarding policies and procedures.

Field Trips

Field trips are a fun and an exciting part of our school curriculum. They reinforce the learning that is taking place inside the classroom. Trips may be simple walking excursions around the neighborhood or more ambitious ones involving carpools. The trip permission form signed at the beginning of the school year will enable your child to be a part of the walking trips in the immediate school area. Whenever more involved trips are planned, a separate form will be issued in advance indicating the destination and method of transportation. Only children whose signed permission slips are on file will be able to take part in these activities. We often need parents to join us as chaperones and drivers.

When going on parent-driven trips, children must use a car seat at all times. A child may never ride in the front seat of any vehicle during a school-sponsored field trip. Parents should make arrangements with their assigned driver to have a car seat properly placed in that car the morning of the day of the trip. The Kaplan Cooperative Preschool is not responsible for properly installing a car seat in a parent's car.

Our Kaplan Cooperative Preschool T-shirt must be worn by your child for all field trips.

Food

Only Kosher food is served at the Kaplan Cooperative Preschool. This includes snack, birthday celebrations, and school sponsored events. If your child stays at the school for afternoon enrichment class, he/she may bring a dairy lunch. This food is not shared with the other children.

Our school is **PEANUT-FREE**. Peanut allergies in children are common, so we do not allow peanuts or peanut butter in the school. Check the ingredients before serving food at the school. Peanut oil may be one of the ingredients. **Kaplan Cooperative Preschool policy requires that you check with the teachers before giving a child, other than your own, any food.**

We do not allow any home baked goods in the school—including birthday cakes and cupcakes. If your home is strictly kosher, please obtain permission from Rabbi Scheinberg to bring home-baked goods into the classroom.

Forms

Each child will need to have completed and updated medical, emergency, policy on release of children, policy on the management of communicable diseases, field trip permission form and personal information forms on file each year prior to the beginning of school in September. Children cannot start school until all forms are complete.

Emergency telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, new home or work numbers should be updated immediately if they change during the year. Don't forget to give us your new address if you move.

Health and Attendance Policies

Children attending school need to be in good health both for their own benefit and the protection of classmates and teachers. Please keep your child home if he or she is ill or uncomfortable. A child who does not feel well cannot effectively participate in the school program. Parents should call the school if a child is ill and unable to attend that day.

Parents are asked to keep their child home when the following conditions exist:

- Fever – 100 degrees or above
Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school
- Diarrhea
- Ear pain
- Vomiting
- Persistent cough
- A green or thick white nasal discharge
- Sore throat and/or strep throat
- Flu-like aches and pains, weakness or general lethargy

- Unexplained rashes
- Chicken pox
- Head lice
- Reddened eyes
- Herpes mouth sore

Don't be surprised when your child first starts school if he/she gets sick more than in the past. It is important that your child remain at home if he/she has fever, diarrhea, a persistent cough, nasal discharge or other contagious condition. Otherwise it is difficult to keep everyone in the classroom healthy! **Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Children must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school. Children who come to school are expected to partake in all activities, including going out-of-doors. If you feel that your child is not up to being part of the entire program, please keep him/her home until he is totally recovered.**

Should your child become ill in school, **he/she will be separated from the group.** You will be contacted and expected to take your child home within one half-hour after the call has been made. If you are not available, emergency contacts will be called. It is important that the school is aware of local emergency contacts.

During the school year, if your child develops any conditions or specific needs that may require special accommodations, please notify the Preschool Director.

Contagious Diseases

Over the course of the school year, incidences of contagious diseases, i.e., chicken pox, head lice, conjunctivitis, strep, Coxsackie virus, etc., might occur. To help protect all children, we require that any contagious diseases be reported to the Preschool Director. If there is an exposure of a contagious condition, the child's class will then receive a note informing everyone of the illness. Confidentiality will be maintained.

A doctor's note stating that the student may return to school is necessary for any contagious disease, including:

- Head Lice
- Chicken Pox
- Strep throat
- Coxsackie virus
- Herpes
- Conjunctivitis
- Whooping cough
- Mumps
- Hemophilus influenzae

All children will be checked for head lice periodically during the school year.

Holidays

Our school celebrates all of the Jewish Holidays. Christmas, Easter, Halloween and Valentine's Day are **not** celebrated in our school. Please respect the school's policy by **not** sending your child to school in a Halloween costume or sending Valentine's Day cards to be distributed through our school mailboxes. We learn about Thanksgiving, and of course we honor parents on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Medications

If your child has a chronic medical condition and needs to take medication in order to attend school you can sign a *Permission to give medication in child care* form and the teachers will give the medication to your child. Please discuss this with the director and review the procedure for giving medication to children at school.

A list of your child's allergies to medications or other substances or foods should be kept strictly up-to-date in school files.

Parent Participation

Our school is a parent cooperative. Parent participation is an essential component of your preschool experience. Our participatory environment encourages the development of a strong sense of community. Parents are required to help with committee participation and as a classroom volunteer. There is a buy-out option for parents who are unable to help with the parent cooperative. The Parent Cooperative is run by a Parent Cooperative Team. The Parent Cooperative Team meets monthly. The team members lead committees that run various Fundraising and Social events at the school. This group also acts as an advisory board for the Director. Parents are asked to join the committee if they have shown an interest in helping run events or taken on additional cooperative responsibilities during the prior school year. The Chairperson is selected by the Director. The Education Chair of the Synagogue Board of Trustees also sits on this committee.

Helping Parent Days (Buyout \$50.00/Day)

Every Kaplan family is expected to assist in the classroom on a regular basis.

If you cannot make one of your assigned days and you have unsuccessfully attempted to find a replacement, you can BUYOUT of your responsibility.

Family Job (Buyout \$350.00)

Each Kaplan family is assigned one committee job by the Kaplan Parent Team. Parents are to fulfill the responsibilities as described in the job description.

Annual Fundraiser

Every family is asked to buy tickets to our annual fundraiser. This fee was included in your tuition invoice. (At the discretion of the Director, this requirement may be waived in cases of financial need.)

If parents do not fulfill their coop duties, they will be billed for the “buyout” fees. In addition, parents may choose to buyout of their family job assignments prior to the beginning of the school year.

Classroom Participation

Work Schedule: Parents work as follows:

- 4’s Classes – September through Thanksgiving / Helping parent each day. Remainder of the school year – Shabbat Child on Fridays.
- 3’s, 2 ½’s and Afternoon Classes - Parents work approximately 12 times in the school year.
- Families of twins will work the same schedule for each child.
- Families with children in more than one class will work in each class.

Helping Parent Days

Arrive with your child at 9:00 am. There is no need to come early.

- Parking near the school can be a challenge. Do not park in front of the school building. This area is for quick drop-off/ pick-up. It is always best if you can walk, take public transportation to the school, or find a legal parking space near the school.
- Please make arrangements for younger siblings when you are scheduled to work in the classroom. If you are nursing please discuss this with the teacher. This is your special time with your child – plus a younger child keeps you busy and is disruptive in the classroom.
- Parents are considered part of the helping staff on the days you are assigned to the classroom. Your role is to help the teacher and assistant with whatever is planned for the day plus assisting with clean-up, snack set-up/clean-up and hand washing.
- **Please check with teachers before you give any food to a child. You may not be aware of allergies or other medical conditions.**
- Your own child will need to be understanding when you are helping parent. Some children find it too difficult to have you in the classroom although they look forward to it. It is not always easy for them to share you. If your child is having difficulty on your helping parent days discuss the situation with your classroom teacher. Do not get upset with your child. It may work out to have you skip some helping parent days or to have you stick with your child for the entire helping parent time.
- Please do not socialize with other adults while supervising children.
- Please remain quiet during circle or story time. It is distracting to the teacher and students if a conversation is going on in the room during these important educational times.
- **Cell Phones** – if possible turn your cell phone off while you are the helping parent. If you must have your phone on and you receive an essential telephone call – go out

to the hall to have your conversation. **DO NOT TALK ON THE TELEPHONE DURING CLASSROOM TIME.**

- The Preschool Director can waive the helping parent responsibility if circumstances in your family warrant this.
- If you are unable to volunteer on a scheduled day please let the school know in the morning that you cannot stay. Try to make a switch with someone in your class. You can leave a message on the school answering machine stating that you will not be able to fulfill your helping parent responsibility. The Director is available in the office at 8:30 am if you need to speak to her directly or email at preschool@HobokenSynagogue.org. If the school hires a substitute teacher you will be billed at our substitute rate of pay (\$50.00 per morning). If your child is sick on a day you are scheduled to be helping parent you are not expected to help in the class. You should be home with your child. If you are unable to stay as helping parent for the day we do appreciate it when you drop off the snack.

School Communication

Back to School Night

The School will hold at least one mandatory parent meeting in the fall—Back to School Night—so that parents can meet with classroom teachers and review curriculum and this handbook. There may be other parent meetings during the school year, as necessary.

School Directory, Class E-Groups, School Newsletter

The school will distribute class lists with address and telephone numbers, and create class e-groups for communication between families. Please let us know if you are not receiving emails from the school. The Director will periodically issue a newsletter informing families of upcoming events and important information. This newsletter will be mailed home.

The directory is the property of the Kaplan Cooperative Preschool and is published and distributed as a service to Kaplan families and staff. The use of the directory or e-groups for commercial or other non Kaplan purposes without the express consent of the director is prohibited.

Friday note

The classroom teachers will write a class note at the end of each week, giving parents information on what happened in class in the past week, upcoming class events and reminders. This class note will be emailed to the e-groups weekly and posted on the parent board by the elevator. We hope that you read this note each week to keep up on the comings and goings in the classroom.

Other communication

Flyers announcing field trips, upcoming school and class special events will be placed in your child's mailbox, emailed and/or posted on the parent board. Please make every effort to check your child's mailbox on a daily basis. If you do not pick up your child, ask whoever does to check your child's mailbox.

Parents receive a school evaluation survey at the end of each school year. The parents are encouraged to complete this survey honestly and openly as feedback is important in establishing policies and procedures for the school.

Parents are encouraged to make suggestions to the parent cooperative chairpersons and the school director. The school director and parent cooperative liaison are available on a daily basis to discuss your concerns or answer your questions.

Separation Guidelines

Separation anxiety is universal and predictable for most children. Children can go through 3 stages: protest, despair and, finally, adjustment, as they separate from their parents and form an attachment to our teachers. The Kaplan staff is committed to helping each family through this process. We are confident that in a short amount of time every child will adjust to our school.

We believe that it is important for parents to take extra time to help their children adjust to a new environment. Children are unpredictable in this area. Even if your child has separated easily in the past, he or she may need some extra time to adjust to school. There can even be a delayed reaction on the second day or several days after your child has attended school. Don't be alarmed if this happens.

We do not allow you to drop off your child and leave without the "Okay" from the teacher or director. Plan to be in the preschool building for at least the first week. Depending on how many days your child is attending this might be plenty of time. If your child is attending less frequently (2-3 days per week) you might need to stay into the second week. This is usually all the time that is needed to help your child feel secure at school.

While you are in the classroom we suggest that you seat yourself in a corner of the room. If your child needs you he/she will come to you. It is important for your child to develop a trusting relationship with the teachers. This happens as they work on projects, go wash hands, read stories, play in the sandbox, tie shoes, put on coats, etc. If you limit your interaction with your child during the preschool day the separation process will move along more quickly.

We feel that it is important for the class to move the separation process along as quickly as possible. The class cannot move forward with our developmentally appropriate curriculum until all the children have completed the separation process. When the teacher feels that it is time for you to leave—as difficult as this might be—we ask that you cooperate. Our teachers have had many years' experience working with children and parents and we are confident in their decisions. We appreciate your trust and support through this very fragile period for everyone. We know how difficult it is to see your child upset and we want you to know that at Kaplan we will always work lovingly with your child while you are not here.

Here are some helpful strategies:

- A week or two before school begins, talk to your child about the fun that he/she will have at school. Gently inform them that you will not be there with them.

- Read to your child about separation and the exciting aspects of school. *Owl Babies* and *The Kissing Hand* are two books that deal with this subject.
- Some children like to bring a comfort object from home—a stuffed animal or special blanket—even a picture of your family may be helpful.
- Review the schedule with your child and remind him/her when you will return to pick him up.
- It's helpful to have a fun activity planned for after school so your child has something to look forward to.

We're so excited that your family is going to be part of the Kaplan family. We strive to provide a wonderful, nurturing environment. Rest assured that all children adjust in their own time. We're looking forward to seeing you at school and working together with your family.

Shabbat

Since Shabbat is central to the Jewish experience, our Preschool strives to instill in our children an appreciation for the prayers and rituals of candle-lighting, blessings over the wine and challah, and music of Shabbat. The Rabbi will join us for a weekly Shabbat program on Friday morning. This will include a visit to the sanctuary.

The school offers a challah program. Families can pre-pay at the beginning of the year to have a challah sent home with their child every Friday. Details will be available at the beginning of the school year.

SHABBATPAK

A different child from each class will get to take the Shabbat backpack home on Friday for the weekend. Your child should return the Shabbatpak on Monday morning (or the next time your child returns to school). When it is your child's turn to take the Shabbatpak home, we encourage each family to do as much or as little as they want to celebrate Shabbat in their home on Friday night. We encourage you to invite another Kaplan family for dinner to celebrate Shabbat with you in your home. The Shabbatpak includes:

- Fresh challah and cover
- Small bottle of grape juice
- 2 candles and holders
- A Kiddush cup
- A tzedakah box—money for charity
- A journal page—this will be shared with the other students in the class during meeting
- The guide to Friday night rituals
- Wooden Shabbat set

- CD of Shabbat music
- Shabbat Book

Show and Tell

Show and Tell is a wonderful opportunity for your child to bring a beloved toy or an interesting “find” in to school to share with others. Please, no sharp or otherwise dangerous objects, no glass objects. No toy weapons, please. Your child’s teacher will let you know when your child has Show and Tell. Most of the time, Show and Tell will be related to our curriculum themes.

Snacks

The helping parent of the day provides a snack for the class. This is very much appreciated by the school and one of the favorite times of the day in the classroom. If it is your turn to provide the snack we ask that you prepare **one** dry snack from the approved list below, plus fresh fruit. The fruit should be cut into bite sized pieces (grapes need to be cut in half). The school provides apple juice and water daily, and grape juice and challah on Friday mornings. All purchased food served at school must be labeled Kosher with a “U” or “K”. (See the preschool director or Rabbi if you have questions). For safety reasons we do not serve popcorn or carrots in the school. Please do not bring in cookies, candy or cake for snack. We only allow these items to be served for class birthday celebrations, and even then only a small portion for each child. Our families appreciate a healthy snack.

Approved Dry Snack List

- *Pretzels*
- *Roberts Gourmet Bootie products*
- *Graham Crackers*
- *Cheese Crackers*
- *Ritz Crackers*
- *Animal Crackers*

Snow Days and School Closings

The Kaplan Cooperative Preschool follows the Hoboken School System closings on snow days or bad weather days. In addition, our Preschool will close for Jewish holidays as noted on our calendar. School will also be closed at the Director’s discretion should there be concern about weather or road conditions. You can check the class e-mail group for information on school closings. There will be no refunds for days missed due to weather. Remember to always check the Preschool calendar; when in doubt call the Preschool office or e-mail us at preschool@HobokenSynagogue.org

Solicitation

Solicitation of Kaplan families is not permitted, on or off the school property. Class lists and e-mail lists are the property of the Kaplan Cooperative Preschool. Use of these lists for non-school related events is strictly prohibited.

Toys in School

As a rule, children are discouraged from bringing personal playthings to class due to possible loss, damage or class disruption. At the beginning of the school year, some children find it necessary to bring something from home as a transitional aid. As the year progresses, however, we encourage your child to say goodbye to his/her toy before they leave home or the car. If it is impossible, try to keep the item in your child's cubby for safekeeping during class.

Financial Policies

Application and Initial Payment Fees

All fees are per student, not per family.

	<u>PAYMENT TYPE</u>	<u>COST</u>
Returning students	Non-refundable deposit at time of application	\$500.00
	Additional non-refundable deposit at time contract is returned to KPS	\$500.00
New student	Non-refundable application fee at time of application	\$75.00
	Non-refundable initial payment at time contract is returned to KPS	\$1,000.00

Payment Options

- Payment in full before April 1, 2009: 5 % discount
- Payment in full by August 3, 2009: 2 % discount
- Semi-annual payments
 - Half remaining tuition due on August 3, 2009
 - The balance due on Jan 4, 2010
- Monthly payments
 - August, September, October, November, December, January.
 - This option carries an additional \$10.00 service charge per month.
 - Monthly payments may be made via cash or credit card: We accept MasterCard, Discover and VISA only. You may also instruct your bank to send a check, payable to United Synagogue of Hoboken, to United Synagogue of Hoboken, 115 Park Ave., Hoboken, NJ 07030-3703.
 - You may instruct us to automatically charge your credit card every month.

Late Payments

- \$20.00 per payment received after the 10th of the month. You will be invoiced this additional charge.

Withdrawal

In general, when a child is withdrawn from KPS, no refund will be given for tuition already paid. In all cases, refunds are given at the discretion of the Director, in consultation with the Treasurer of the United Synagogue of Hoboken.

The following will provide some additional guidance:

Full and half days in the preschool

- Withdrawal from January 1 (that is, where the child has been in the preschool September through December): no refund of money already paid.
- Withdrawal prior to January 1: partial refund not to exceed 75% of money already paid, if and when the Director can fill the space.

Afternoon enrichment

- Refund of unused portion of the tuition, less an administrative fee of 15%.
- No refund will be given for unused portions of an “Afternoon 10-pack.” However, if the parent or guardian wishes, we will consider the remaining amount a donation to the preschool, and write a letter to that effect.

The application fee and deposit are non-refundable, without exception.

Charges for Non-members of United Synagogue of Hoboken

Families of which at least one parent or guardian is not a member of United Synagogue of Hoboken will be assessed an additional \$350 for the USH Building Campaign. This charge may be converted to cover a portion of membership dues should the family decide to join USH during the school year.

Important Telephone Numbers

United Synagogue of Hoboken	201 659-4000
Kaplan Cooperative Preschool	201 653-8666
Rachelle Grossman, Director	973 243-0422 home 201 910-6056 cell
Rabbi Rob Scheinberg	201 653-6696
Fax	201 659-2614
e-mail	preschool@hobokensynagogue.org