



RICHMOND
JEWISH
DAY SCHOOL

2023-2024

RJDS Early Learning Centre Handbook

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Welcome, and bruchim habaim!

Richmond Jewish Day School: Early Learning Centre is a fully licensed child care facility. Our inclusive, play-based early years programming combines quality child care with a deep appreciation of Jewish religion, culture, heritage and values. Extending from 0-5 years of age, RJDS Early Learning Centre, represents the entire spectrum of the Jewish Community.



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Mission

RJDS Early Learning Centre is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where young children feel confident to express their most authentic selves. Inspired by Jewish values and traditions, we are an inclusive centre that welcomes children and families from all backgrounds.

Values

- Secure relationships between young children and their caregivers are the foundations for healthy development.
- Children are capable, whole human beings and deserve unconditional respect.
- Security, play and curiosity provide the opportunity for children to push boundaries and ultimately reach their fullest potential.
- Positive community relationships are built through transparent communication and family participation.
- Educators serve as nurturers, researchers and collaborators, honouring children’s individual rights, needs and interests.

Program Director's Message

Dear Families,

The RJDS Early Learning Centre has successfully completed its inaugural year and we are thrilled to welcome new and returning families as we embark on our second year of operation. The demand for high-quality, Jewish child care within our community has become even more apparent, with our classes and waitlists filling up rapidly.

This year's achievements can be largely attributed to the remarkable support and positive relationships we have fostered with our parents. As an alumna, a current school parent, and a former board member, I have had the privilege of experiencing the strong culture of community and collaboration at RJDS. The families in our Early Learning Centre have already demonstrated a commitment to these values. Working alongside our dedicated and experienced Early Childhood Educators, I continue to be honoured to participate in nurturing our community's children during these formative years. Profound connections have been established among parents, staff, children, and the broader community. Witnessing some of our Gan Bet graduates progress to RJDS' Kindergarten class this year fills us with pride and evokes visions of growth for our little blue school.

The Early Learning Centre remains committed to maintaining high standards of quality care. Our mission and values are supported by clear policies and procedures, comprehensively outlined in this Handbook, which has been thoughtfully curated to guide families and staff in understanding various scenarios throughout the children's time in our care. Upholding these standards is a collaborative effort, as your advocacy and cooperation will help support the educators to consistently provide a well-rounded program. RJDS cultivates a spirit of transparency and openness, valuing every individual's voice. With Gan families joining our PAC (Parent Advisory Council) this year, an array of opportunities to engage awaits.

After a year of growth and learning within a brand-new program, I am beyond excited to advance our programming and services. This endeavor is to ensure that your children encounter the full spectrum of benefits that a high-quality, Jewish early learning centre can offer. On behalf of the principal, staff, board of directors and myself, welcome back to RJDS!

Sincerely,

Sara Solomon
Program Director, RJDS Early Learning Centre



Philosophy of Early Learning and Care

Early Learning Framework

The [BC Early Learning Framework](#) is a comprehensive document designed for educators, parents and families to utilize as a guide towards positive relationships, inclusive practices (culture, social and children with diverse abilities), and reconciliation within learning communities. While it was originally published in 2008, a revised version was released in 2019 after a collaborative process of consultation with early childhood educators, primary teachers, academics, Indigenous organizations, Elders, government, and professionals. This new version makes a purposeful effort to “resist language, concepts, and pedagogies that perpetuate legacies of colonization and marginalization of Indigenous people...(and)... strives to contribute to lasting reconciliation with Indigenous people.”

The revised version expanded its focus on children from ages 0-5 to 0-8, making its principles especially relevant in early learning settings, as the philosophies and concepts directly connect with the Ministry of Education in B.C.’s Curriculum and Core Competencies. Pedagogical philosophies in B.C.’s progressive educational system have a more interrelated approach than in the past, which reflects the holistic nature of learning that has influenced this framework. Understanding this evolution in education should have a direct effect on how we perceive the early years and the types of opportunities, experiences and learning environments we provide for children before they enter the education system.

An Emergent and Responsive Curriculum

A traditional classroom may involve teacher-led themes and activities, however, the RJDS Early Learning Centre employs a responsive, constructivist play-based approach that is imperative for 21st-century learners. Such a setting provides opportunities, experiences, and materials that are responsive to our children’s interests, passions and play behaviours relevant to the children in our care.

Young children learn best when their curiosity is encouraged and nurtured. Through a child-centered and personalized approach, our children will develop a true love for learning. Not only will they feel respected as co-constructors of the curriculum, but having this flexible approach to learner outcomes means unlimited opportunities to build on concepts that relate to every aspect of their world.

One major component of the BC Curriculum is its focus on inquiry-based learning. This multi-modal approach fosters critical thinking and collaboration while giving children a sense of ownership over their learning. By fostering curiosity, we invite inquiry from our children to build an emergent curriculum with the highest potential for engagement.

The Philosophy of ‘True’ Play

We often talk about play as something that we can only engage in when our work is done. With children, we are constantly trying to look for purpose in their play, or structuring their activities, thereby infrequently allowing for ‘true’ or free play. Many things masquerade as play, like board

games and crafts, but these are not considered true play as they are structured activities, designed by adults, with a goal or intended outcome. But true play – that is, child-centred with no external agenda, -- is critical to a child’s development. True play, in and of itself, is how children learn to solve problems and develop skills, free from any real-world consequences. Within safe boundaries provided by their adults and a physical environment with open-ended materials, children can be free to explore, tinker, create and experiment for long, uninterrupted periods of time.

There are already plenty of rules and expectations for young children in their everyday routines, so having this time when they can create the rules to process their life experiences, is critical to their development. In play-based learning, children choose their own activities each day and the learning environment is often broken up into sections or stations. For example, a room may have a block or lego area, a dramatic play area, a reading nook, and others. Play-based programs are also sometimes called ‘child-centered’ because the children guide their own learning with their curiosity and interests. This should not be confused with a lack of routines and expectations. Children in the RJDS Early Learning centre will also be provided with the opportunity to participate in more structured activities offered, however, we believe that the children should be the directors of their own learning experiences.

The most recent scientific evidence emphasizes the crucial role true play can have on a child’s development, rather than the hasty push for early instruction and academics. As local clinical counsellor, developmentalist and author, Dr. Deborah Macnamara, states, “In play, the goal is not to push a form onto a child but rather to free their spirit to explore, discover, and to express itself.”

Exposure to open-ended experiences and play in the early years contributes to positive socio-emotional outcomes, enhances creativity, and encourages self-esteem. Being allowed to make mistakes during the early years, through open-ended exploration also helps children develop a growth mindset, in which they believe in their own potential, have improved self-confidence, and develop resiliency. These are the foundations for future academic learning, innovation and creative expression.

An Integrated Judaic Curriculum

At the RJDS Early Learning Centre, Judaics are weaved into their everyday experiences in natural ways through the emergent and play-based approaches. Judaic concepts and history may be introduced through storytelling, while language and traditions may be experienced through conversations and songs. The idea is to immerse the children in the culture through their natural environment, and to invite further inquiry as they grow older.

As a pluralistic school, RJDS recognizes that the Jewish community is very diverse, both in terms of practice and identity. We welcome all perspectives as long as they are respectful to each other and acknowledge RJDS’s core values - integrity, compassion, learning, resilience, community and respect. Laws of Kashrut are followed for any food served and all of the major Jewish holidays are observed in child-friendly ways.

Holidays and traditions may be introduced in different ways to reflect our community’s varied perspectives. We also want to acknowledge our intersectionality with both our local and global



community. While other religious celebrations won't necessarily be included in our yearly planning, cultures and celebrations may be acknowledged, as long as they are relevant to the children's real-life exposure and/or inquiries, the content is secular in nature (food, dance, non-religious symbolism), and does not overshadow or undermine our Mission and Jewish values.

A Guiding and Caring Learning Environment

The foundation of the RJDS Early Learning Centre is heavily reliant on healthy, positive relationships between the children and our educators. A healthy attachment means that the child looks to the adult for guidance and safety through trust. We take it upon ourselves to understand the individual needs of each child and their different personalities, so we can set appropriate boundaries and be a safe space for them to work through their emotions. This helps them learn how to adapt to various real-life situations and creates resiliency. Understanding the developmental needs of a child is the first step in helping them mature. Children have a natural hunger for contact and closeness and cannot move forward until those basic needs are met. Once they feel safe and secure, children begin to actively seek learning opportunities to explore the world around them.

As children are capable, whole human beings, we must trust they will develop and grow at the pace nature intended, without skipping stages or trying to speed up the process. There is a misconception that "attachment" or allowing children to express their emotions is overly permissive. However, research in child development tell us that the opposite is true. We can be authoritative without being authoritarian, and providing a safe space for children to work through their emotions is necessary to lay the foundations for self-regulation, which ultimately prevents more negative behaviour.

RJDS's educators maintain strong relationships with the families and practice a collaborative strength-based approach that focuses on the meaning of a child's behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. Expectations of self-regulation are adjusted to developmentally appropriate levels and we never use a child's behaviour as a condition for affection. Children must know they are unconditionally loved, so they can be authentic with their emotions and always be accepted. It's through this emotionally-safe space that children learn resilience and build enough confidence to "spread their wings" and become independent, thoughtful and socially responsible individuals.

Faculty & Staff 2023/2024

Administration	
Head of School/Principal	<i>Sabrina Bhojani</i>
Business Manager	<i>Janet Ragetli</i>
Administrative Assistant	<i>Stacey Szeplabi</i>
Office & Communications Coordinator	<i>Jordan Sukkau</i>
Director of Community Engagement	<i>Katia Fermon</i>
Director of RJDS Early Learning Centre	<i>Sara Solomon</i>

Early Learning Centre Educators	
Gan Aleph Ages 0-3	Gan Bet Ages 3-5
<i>Josie Ng</i>	<i>Leah Yusupov</i>
<i>Kent Chau</i>	<i>Maxwell Change</i>
<i>Jacqueline Gao</i>	<i>Julia Levinson</i>
<i>Ellie Wang</i>	<i>TBA</i>

Teaching Staff	
<i>Tammia Bowden</i> <i>BC Curriculum Teacher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BC Curriculum: Grades 5 - 7</i> • <i>Music</i> • <i>PE</i>
<i>Batsheva Michaeli</i> <i>Hebrew and Judaics Teacher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hebrew and Judaics: Grade K-4</i> • <i>Art: Grades K-7</i>
<i>Riki Oirechman</i> <i>Hebrew and Judaics Teacher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hebrew and Judaics: Grade 2-7</i>
<i>Mary-Anne Rachman</i> <i>BC Curriculum Teacher</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BC Curriculum: Grades K-4</i> • <i>Library: Grades K-7</i>

Support Staff	
Counsellor	<i>Malki Moshkovitz</i>
Educational Assistant	<i>Bettina Jacob</i>
Educational Assistant & Student Life Coordinator	<i>Reesa Pauer</i>
Educational Assistant & After School Care	<i>Liel Rabinovich</i>
Educational Assistant	<i>Solfrid Karimiha</i>

Closures and Early Dismissals

Please note that the following closure and early dismissal dates are subject to change. Please use the online [RJDS calendar](#) for up-to-date K-7 and ELC dates.

Closures			Early Dismissals
SEPT	Friday, Sept. 1 Monday, Sept. 4 Monday, Sept. 25	Admin/Pro D Day Labour Day Yom Kippur	Friday, Sept. 15
OCT	Monday, October 2 Monday, October 9	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Thanksgiving Day	Friday, Oct. 20
NOV	Monday, Nov. 13 Tuesday, Nov. 14	Remembrance Day Pro D Day	Friday, Nov. 24
DEC	Monday, Dec. 25 Tuesday, Dec 26 Wednesday, Dec 27 Thursday, Dec 28 Friday, Dec 29	Christmas Day Winter Break Winter Break Winter Break Winter Break	
JAN	Monday, Jan. 1	New Year's Day	Friday, Jan. 5
FEB	Friday, Feb 16 Monday, Feb. 19	Pro D Day Family Day	Friday, Feb. 2
MAR	Friday, March 29	Good Friday	Friday, March 22
APR	Monday, Apr. 1 Tuesday, Apr. 23 Wednesday, Apr. 24 Monday, Apr. 29 Tuesday, Apr. 30	Easter Monday Passover Passover Passover Passover	Friday, Apr. 19
MAY	Monday, May 20	Victoria Day	Friday, May 3
JUN	Wednesday, Jun. 12 Thursday, Jun. 13 Friday, Jun. 28	Shavuot Shavuot Admin/Pro D Day	Friday, Jun. 7
JUL	Monday, July 1	Canada Day	Friday, July 5
AUG	Monday, Aug. 5 Tuesday, Aug. 6 Wednesday, Aug. 7 Thursday, Aug. 8 Friday, Aug. 9	B.C Day Summer Break Summer Break Summer Break Summer Break	

Unplanned Closures

In the case of heavy snowfall, check out the school website, our school Facebook page, and the Brightwheel app for a notification. You may also listen to CBC AM 690 Radio, as they often have an up to date list of school closures.

If we must close for the day, for any reason (snow, power outage, flooding, communicable disease outbreak, staffing shortage, etc.), we will do our best to contact each family as early as possible. Please note that refunds are not issued for unplanned weather or emergency-related closures.

Daily Routine

- The following schedules are general guides showing the flow of each day, and may vary from time to time; however, unless a child is in a sleep transition or gradual entry, the windows of time for naps are firm (ie: naps may be shorter, but cannot start or end outside of these times.)
- Planned activities, handwashing, bathroom breaks and dressing are included at appropriate times throughout the day,
- Indoor play time occurs throughout the day whenever children aren't engaged in a routine activity.
- Children may start and finish routine activities at different times – sometimes in small groups and sometimes individually.
- Additional group/circle times may be added when appropriate.

Gan Aleph

8:00	Doors Open
9:15-10:00	Morning Snack
9:30-10:30	Optional Morning Nap
10:00 - 11:30	Outdoor Play
11:00 - 12:15	Lunch Time
12:00 - 4:30	Afternoon Nap
3:15-4:00	Afternoon Snack
3:30-5:15	Outdoor Play
5:30	Doors Close

Gan Bet

8:00	Doors Open
9:45 - 10:15	Morning Snack
10:15 - 10:45	Group/Circle Time
10:45 - 12:00	Outdoor Play
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch and Quiet Book Time
1:00 - 3:00	Nap and Quiet Activities
3:30-4:00	Afternoon Snack
4:00-5:15	Outdoor Play
5:30	Doors Close

Gradual Entry

Entering a new environment is a big event for a young child. To make the transition as comfortable as possible for both the child and the family, we implement a gradual entry period for a minimum of four days. The amount of time they spend at the centre is short for the first day, and then that time increases incrementally each day. If your child shows signs of needing an extended gradual entry period we will discuss a modified schedule on an individual basis. Our educators intend to work closely with the families to help meet the needs of each family.

We understand that taking time away from work and other responsibilities is a challenge, but keeping your schedule flexible for this period is necessary. The times indicated in your gradual entry schedule reflect the amount of time the child stays that day, with instructions for parent assistance.

Tips for a Smooth Transition

- Stay accountable - If you say you are going to be back in 10 minutes, be back in 10 minutes. This is to establish trust and maintain a secure attachment with you, so your child knows that when they are at RJDS, you will always be back.
- Bridge the next connection - A healthy attachment to a parent means that when the child is at daycare, the goal is to hold on to that attachment. It's not about separating; it's about staying attached while apart. So, if your child is anxious, rather than talk about the time spent away from you, put the focus on your next connection. What will you do when you see each other again?
- Let your child have their emotions - It's normal for children to be nervous and sad in a new environment. Acknowledge the feelings and just be there for them.
- Be patient - Let your child decide when they are ready to engage in play and with other people. Find a home base for yourself in the classroom, so they know where to find you. Sit back and let them observe with you.
- Connect with the staff - To help your child feel safe and secure with new adults, they need to see positive interactions between them and their family members, the people with whom they already have strong attachments. Your child may not be ready to say hi, and that's ok, so let them sit on your lap or hold your leg while you get to know us.
- Say Goodbye - Although it can be tempting to sneak away when you see your child is engaged in play, don't do it. This can increase anxiety when your child notices you are gone and discourage independent play going forward, for fear that you may disappear. When you have decided it is time for you to leave the room, but anticipate some anxiety from your child, find a staff member that your child is comfortable with to assist and have a special, but brief goodbye routine for each day.



Enrollment

Enrollment Policy

- As a condition of the admission of a child to RJDS Early Learning Centre, the enrolling parent/guardian must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Enrollment Agreement (the "Agreement"), in the Enrollment Package.
- A deposit of \$1000 (\$1125 for two children) is required to be submitted with the Agreement for the application to RJDS Early Learning Centre to be considered complete. Of this deposit, \$225 (\$350 for two children) is non-refundable.
- The enrolling parent/guardian is responsible for all tuition payments and any failure to pay tuition when due constitutes default of the Agreement. All tuition is due as per the "PAD AGREEMENT", which should indicate the 1st of each month enrolled. Interest of 1.5% per month (18% per year) will be added to accounts that are more than 30 days overdue.
- In the event of a default under the Agreement, the parent/guardian must pay all the costs of the RJDS Early Learning Centre associated with enforcing its rights under this Agreement, including, without limitation, collection agency fees, reasonable legal fees, arbitration costs, and any other costs associated with collecting any debt owed by parent/guardian to RJDS, with or without suit. RJDS reserves the right to restrict re-enrollment of a child whose accounts are not up-to-date.

Withdrawal Policy and Withdrawal Schedule

The enrolling parent/guardian is obligated to provide formal notice to the Director at least two months in advance of their child's last day of care. For example, if December 31st is the last day of care, then notice on or before October 31st is required.

The family is not entitled to a refund of any deposits, tuition fees already paid or additional fees paid, without appropriate notice as per the Withdrawal Policy and that tuition will be immediately due and payable in accordance with the Withdrawal Schedule.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the application of the Withdrawal Policy may be modified or waived in whole or in part, under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Executive of the Board of Directors, upon written request from the family outlining in detail their reasons for requesting said modification or waiver. All such requests shall be kept confidential.

Upon notice of withdrawal, \$775 of this amount (or \$387.50 per child if two children graduate at different times) will be subtracted from your final tuition fees upon graduation or two months' withdrawal notice. Failure to pay tuition in accordance with this Withdrawal Schedule constitutes a default under this Agreement, entitling RJDS to all remedies available at law and in equity.

Government Subsidies

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

- The agreement is between the BC government and the child care centre, so no action need to be taken by the family.
- The benefit applies to all families, regardless of income.
- The CCFRI allows the school to offer a subsidized tuition rate.
- As of December 1st, 2022, tuition savings are as follows:
 - Under 3 years \$900
 - 3-5 years \$545
- If at any point the government discontinues the CCFRI, full fees will be charged to the family.

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)

- The agreement is between the BC government and the family and is determined by household income.
- Once approved, the amount is automatically subtracted from future monthly tuition and the previous month’s balance is refunded to the family (if approval comes after your child has already started care)
- If funding is denied or the family is in breach of the funding agreement (for example, child has been absent for longer than the allowable period), the family is responsible for the balance of fees owed to RJDS.

Tuition and Fees

	0-18 Months	18-36 Months	3-5 Years
Full Monthly Fees before CCFRI Savings	\$1624	1570	1194
Monthly Parent Portion after CCFRI Savings	\$724	\$670	\$649
Annual Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Dues	\$36		
One-Time Fees:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deposit – to hold your space, this is due immediately after it has been offered. 	\$1000** for one child \$1125** for two children		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Fob Deposit – will be refunded when returned to the school 	\$20 each		

**\$775 of this amount (or \$387.50 per child if two children graduate at different times) will be subtracted from your final tuition fees upon graduation or two months’ withdrawal notice.



Drop off and Pickup

Parking Lot

Parking guidelines have been established with the help of our police liaison officer, parents and staff, and are designed for the safety of the students and children of Richmond Jewish Day School. Parents are not permitted to walk their children through the parking lot at any time as this poses a serious safety issue. Please park in the spots on the perimeter of the lot and walk on the sidewalks around the perimeter only.

All parents, staff and students are to adhere to the parking lot etiquette and the parking plan for the 2023-2024 school year.

Drop Off

We expect all children to be dropped off by 10AM each morning. This helps reduce disruptions during busy transition times. If you are running late or your child will be absent for the day, you MUST inform your child's teachers as early as possible. If you arrive late, you may be asked to stay with your child until the teachers are ready to assist with the transition.

Please ensure you check-in your child using the Brightwheel app and ensure the educator is aware of your child's presence in the classroom prior to leaving.

Please also make sure your child is wearing clean and comfortable shoes indoors and puts away their lunch bag/backpack and water bottle in the appropriate location such that the cubby spaces remain neat and tidy.

Pickup

Remember to check out your child using the Brightwheel app and ensure the teacher is aware that you have come to pick up before leaving with your child.

Late Pickup Policy

All families must exit the school by 5:30pm. If you are running late, please notify your child's teachers as soon as possible.

A late fee of \$10.00 per 15 minutes per child will be charged to the family if a child remains in care after 5:30 pm. If parent/guardians are late on a regular basis, the Program Director will discuss solutions and/or next steps with the family.

Safe Release of Children Policy

Authorized Pickup List

Your child will be released only to an authorized adult on your pick-up list, as indicated on your registration form. If you authorize another person to pick up your child that is not on the pickup list, parents are required to notify us of this change electronically over e-mail or Brightwheel. A photo ID will be required at pickup time any time the teacher does not recognize the pickup person. Without the parent's documented consent, the child will not be released.

Car Seat Provisions

It is important to be aware of **car seat safety laws**. Our educators have a duty to inform authorities if they are aware of possible risk of harm and/or illegal activities that relate to a child. Therefore, your child may not be released if our staff determine that your designated pick-up person does not have sufficient child restraint installation.

The following link provides information on the **minimum** legal requirements for car seat safety in British Columbia. However, it is recommended to follow best practices, which go above the minimum legal requirements. [Child Passenger Safety Best Practices](#)

Custody Agreement

If an enrolling guardian informs the school that there is a legal custody agreement for the child, the guardian must provide a copy of the custody restriction and court order to dictate who can or cannot pick up the child.

Release of a Child to an Impaired Adult

The educators at RJDS have an ethical and legal responsibility to always ensure the well-being of the children when in their care. If an authorized guardian appears to be incapable of providing safe care for their child at the time of pickup, they will not be released under any circumstances.

Staff will take one or all of the following steps to ensure the safety of the child.

- Call a relative or friend to pick up the parent and child.
- Arrange a cab ride home.
- If the situation becomes violent or the parent insists on driving home in an impaired state, the police will be contacted.

Failure to Pick Up a Child

If a child is not picked up at the end of the day, staff will take the following steps, in the following order:

1. Contact the parents / guardians at all phone numbers provided and leave a voice message.
2. If parents are unreachable, we will contact the alternate authorized persons list.
3. We will contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development at 604-310-1234 or 604-660-4972 and follow directions given if a child is not picked up 60 minutes after closure and we have been unable to contact anyone in the child's file.

What to Bring

On or before your child's first day, please bring the following items to leave at RJDS.

All additional items should be left at home, as our classroom environment is carefully designed with thoughtful attention to the materials included. Toys from home can sometimes be a distraction, especially when they get lost.

Keep in mind that the details outlined in this list are to ensure your child can effectively participate in all activities. For example, if their rain gear is insufficient, your child will still be required to participate in outdoor time. If their health and/or safety is at risk, a parent will be called to pick up their child. Please do not send umbrellas, as they are playground hazards.

Note: Please label EVERYTHING with your child's name in an obvious spot.

1. Bedding/Sleep aides

- Fitted crib sheet.
 - Sleep sack (optional)
 - Soother (optional)
 - Blanket* (optional)
 - Small stuffed toy* (optional)
- *not permitted for children sleeping in cribs

2. Clothing

- 3 extra underpants
- 3 extra pants/shorts
- 3 extra shirts/onesies
- 3 extra pairs of socks
- 1 pair of indoor shoes (comfortable, lightweight, easy to put on and remove)

3. Outerwear

- 1 jacket
- 1 pair of seasonally- and weather-appropriate shoes for outside
 - Comfortable, lightweight, closed-toe and heel, secure, easy for child to put on and remove themselves, non-slip/skid-proof
- 1 quality, well-fitting rain suit - recommended brands are Didriksons, Jan & Jul, Hatley, Helly Hansen, etc. NOT Tuffo, as the waterproofing doesn't hold up.
- 1 pair of rain boots
- Seasonal accessories ie: winter/summer hat, gloves (including good quality waterproof ones that go over sleeves - recommended brands are Ocean/Abeko, Kombi, Jan & Jul, etc.)

4. Food

- Lunch bag
 - Healthy balanced lunch
 - No nuts or peanuts
 - Only dairy or pareve items may be microwaved. Meat lunches may be served warm in a thermos.
- Full water bottle

5. Self Care

- Bug spray (optional) and sunscreen (May-September)
- Diapers, pull-ups, creams, etc. if applicable

Food and Wellness

Food Policies

The Richmond Jewish Day School is committed to providing a positive Jewish educational setting that is comfortable for all members of the Jewish community. The school strives to impart Jewish practices through formal study and experience so that the students will be knowledgeable when making personal decisions about Jewish observance. This observance extends to the Early Learning Centre, where RJDS children have their earliest experiences in our Jewish environment.

Jewish dietary laws (Kashrut), regulations that prohibit the eating of certain foods and require that foods be prepared in a specified manner, play an important role in the life of the school community. It is presented in the classroom as an ideal and a mitzvah.

RJDS' Kashrut policy is as follows:

- a) Shellfish and pork are not permitted on school premises.
- b) Prepared food is only permitted from a certified Kosher Check (formerly BCK) establishment. In other words, meals and snacks are not permitted from non-kosher restaurants (e.g. Subway, Tim Hortons, etc.) regardless of whether the meal or snack is vegetarian or otherwise.
- c) Food items intended to be shared with other children for celebrations or activities must be Kosher Check certified or must have been prepared in the school's kosher kitchen with approval from school administration. Home-baked goods to be brought into the school for such events are not permitted.
- d) Lunch and snacks provided by a family for their child(ren) must not mix milk and meat.
- e) Students are permitted to bring meat in their lunches or snacks. It is strongly encouraged that all meat products are certified kosher.
- f) Students are not permitted to share their lunch or snacks with other students at any time.
- g) The Early Learning Centre will offer dairy snacks regularly, separately from children's meat lunches. Meat items in children's lunches will not be permitted during snack time if dairy is being provided by the teachers.
- h) For events where the school intends to provide dairy food to students (e.g. Shavuot celebration, pizza Lunch Lab, etc.), advanced notice will be given and families are strongly encouraged to send only pareve or dairy lunches and snacks that day.
- i) For events where the school intends to provide meat to students (e.g. BBQ, hot lunch program, etc.), advanced notice will be given and families are strongly encouraged to send only pareve or meat lunches and snacks that day.

Families are asked to comply with RJDS values of inclusion and respect of other families' needs by only serving Kosher food at birthday parties and events.

The above policy applies to all school-related activities held outside the school where RJDS students are present or participate. School staff and administration will ensure that food provided on extended field trips or overnight events complies with the policy.

Positive Eating/No-Pressure Policy

We support healthy eating practices by providing a positive eating environment and healthy snacks, while encouraging families to send healthy, balanced lunches.

To strengthen the children's independence and so they can learn how to recognize their bodies' needs, we avoid any time of coercion towards eating. We encourage the provision of a variety of balanced food items, based on the Canada Food Guide, and sufficient time to eat, but it's up to the children to decide how much of each item they will eat, how long it takes them, and often, even if they eat, within reasonable boundaries according to the class routine. We believe that the more we push, the less appealing a food option or the experience of eating is to a child and it's crucial that children be given as much control as possible in this area. We continually take note of what foods the children prefer and what isn't as popular and re-evaluate and tweak the snack menu based on these observations. We also observe the children's eating habits and document any behaviours that aren't developmentally appropriate or that negatively impacts a child's health and ability to thrive.

Food Allergy (Nut-Aware) Policy

At RJDS, we strive to provide a safe environment for all our children. To that end, we must respect the fact that some of our children have life-threatening allergies to peanuts, nuts and nut products. For some children, ingestion of or exposure to these products or unknowingly touching traces or residues of this food substance (e.g., on a ball, a hand, student desk or lunch table) could cause anaphylactic shock, and, without immediate emergency medical assistance, loss of consciousness and death.

In response, RJDS, like most other Early Learning Centre's throughout the Lower Mainland, is a "peanut/nut aware" school. This means that products containing peanuts, nuts or nut products in students' lunches will not be allowed in the school or on the playground. Food brought in for common consumption must not contain peanuts, nuts or nut products. We do not use the terminology "peanut/nut free" because we cannot guarantee that there will never be traces of peanuts/nuts in the school. Therefore, while the school cannot guarantee a nut-free environment, out of respect and concern for those in our school community with severe and/or life-threatening nut allergies, the Board requires that parents **NOT SEND LUNCHES OR SNACKS OR ENTER THE SCHOOL WITH ANY NUT PRODUCTS.**

Should a child accidentally bring peanut butter or nut products to school and staff members are aware of it, efforts will be made to provide an appropriate and safe substitute on that particular day.

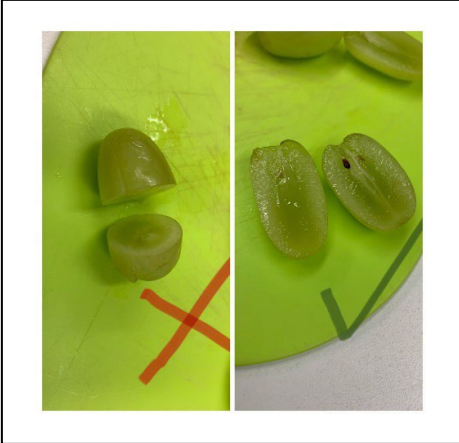
Parents/Guardians are to provide RJDS with proper information and any medication (ie: Epi-pen)

for the allergies regarding their child prior to the start date. It is the parents’/guardians’ responsibility to ensure they relay all important allergy information to RJDS upon enrolment. The staff will do their utmost diligence to ensure the child will not be exposed to the allergen.

All medical forms are updated each year. If a child requires a Medical Care Plan, the director will ensure that all paperwork is up to date, stored in the child’s file, and posted in the classroom. A Permission to Administer Emergency Medication form must be submitted along with a completed Medical Care Plan.

Special Diets

In addition to allergies and kashrut, if your child has any dietary restrictions, please add this information to the indicated portion of the registration form. The director will file and post an updated list of dietary restrictions whenever parents make changes in their child’s diet. Cultural practices can dictate specific rules governing acceptable food preparation and parents are encouraged to speak with the director should this apply to their child. This may include different standards of Kashrut than the RJDS policy. We will do our best to accommodate special dietary needs in our snack menu and food preparation.

<p>Food Safety</p> <p>Certain foods are considered a choking or aspiration hazard and should not be sent to RJDS.</p> <p>Some examples are: gummies, hard candies, chewing gum, lollipops, marshmallows and popcorn.</p> <p>Smooth, round foods such as grapes, hot dogs, gnocchi, carrots, cherry tomatoes and olives, may be sent but must be cut lengthwise beforehand.</p>	
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Drinks

Please send a full spill-proof water cup with your child every day. We use them at meal times and have them available for drinking and refills throughout the day. Please do not send any juice or other sugary drinks. Milk may be provided in a separate spill-proof cup or bottle and be put in the class refrigerator at drop-off time.

Naptime and Rest

All children in Gan Aleph and Gan Bet are provided with a safe, comfortable and quiet place to themselves for rest or sleep after lunchtime. Some younger children may require two naps per day, which would mean a different sleep schedule for them.

As per safe sleep guidelines, we ensure that each child is positioned for sleep only on his or her back unless the child can roll over without assistance. All cribs and sleep mats are equipped with a fitted sheet (supplied by the parents/guardians) and any child younger than one-year old may not have any loose items in the crib or within reach. This includes but is not limited to, loose, soft bedding, blankets, bumper pads, pillows or toys.

Sleep spaces are kept at a comfortable temperature. Young children can be at risk of overheating, and it is recommended that they only need to wear a fitted sleeper. An additional layer of a well-fitted, thin sleep sack that allows leg movement is permitted.

Staff work with families to develop an appropriate sleep routine for each individual child, while keeping the needs of the group in mind. It is understandable that parents/guardians may have specific requests, for instance enforcing, skipping or shortening a nap. We will do our best to assist each child to achieve a healthy sleep schedule, however, sometimes this is not possible. Examples of when the staff may not intervene could include when a child shows extreme distress or is disruptive of other children's rest needs.

Diapering and Toileting

Our qualified educators assist the children regularly with diapering and toileting, depending on their individual needs. As children learn to use the toilet at their own pace, we follow their cues by helping them understand their physical and emotional needs and encourage them when they are ready. We work closely with the families and want to support their goals. However, it is important for parents/guardians to respect the feedback of the educators if their child is showing signs that they are not ready. This can be a sensitive topic, so honest communication and transparency are important as we work together.

For children who still require diapers, families must ensure their supply of diapers, wipes and any required creams are regularly replenished.

Active Play Policy

In order to support children's healthy physical development, and to meet the requirements of the Director of Licensing Standards of Practice – Active Play, our full day programs, whenever possible incorporate a minimum of 120 minutes of active play and physical movement, and ensure a minimum 60 minutes per day of outdoor active play (indoor active play is acceptable when weather is poor or outdoor physical space is limited).

While we may use the gym at times, expect that your children will play outside daily, rain or shine. Being outdoors gives the children an opportunity for more adventurous and risky play. They can test their physical boundaries, release their energy, and explore new territory.



Your children will get dirty and wet, so please provide durable, weather-appropriate clothing. Please keep in mind, however, that while we always encourage appropriate clothing, sometimes the children have different ideas. Other than in extreme weather conditions, it is important that the children learn how to recognize what their bodies need to protect them, without it being forced upon them. Sometimes they just need to experience a little discomfort, which is more likely to encourage them to make appropriate clothing choices on their own. The educators will always make sure no lines are crossed in terms of child safety.

Screen Use Policy

According to Vancouver Coastal Health's recommended best practices, all licensed childcare programs must limit screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) to 30 minutes or less a day. Our programs do not include the regular use of screens. Screen time is not offered to children under two years of age. Our staff demonstrate appropriate modelling of screen time.

Health and Safety

Illness Policy

There are specific topics of concern that we take into account when determining whether or not your child is too ill to attend RJDS:

- protecting the health of all children in the facility
- providing the ill child comfort, rest, and safety
- the capacity of the staff to care for an ill child

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a health check on their child each day before dropping leaving them at RJDS Early Learning Centre. Staff will conduct an additional informal health check at the beginning of each day before the parent/guardian leaves the centre.

In the event that a child becomes sick at RJDS or the staff discover their symptoms from a recent illness are still present, the parent/guardian will be called and required to pick up their child immediately. Your child will be kept comfortable and monitored until you arrive.

RJDS Early Learning Centre follows the guide and reporting procedures for Common Communicable Diseases in accordance with Vancouver Coastal Health.

There are no exceptions to this illness policy. Parents/guardians are encouraged to find alternate care options for children who are required to stay home for a period of time. We understand this can be a big inconvenience for families, but if we allow children to come to RJDS when sick, then not only will it spread to other families, but also to our staff. If we are understaffed, then we have to close, and that is a scenario we want to do our absolute best to avoid.

Unfortunately, fees cannot be refunded due to illness, whether for a child's absence or closure due to staff illness, as there are still ongoing operating costs.

Please keep your child home or seek alternate care arrangements if:

- They are not well enough to participate in regular programming and routines

AND/OR

- They are suffering from one or more of the following symptoms/conditions:
 - Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain.
 - A common cold with listlessness, runny nose and eyes, coughing and sore throat.
 - Difficulty in breathing - wheezing or a persistent cough.
 - Fever (100 degrees F/38.3 degrees C or more) accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness or sluggishness, (this may also require a doctor's attention).
 - Sore throat or trouble swallowing.
 - Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash.
 - Headache and stiff neck (should see a physician).

- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool (may or may not be combined with nausea, vomiting or stomach cramps). These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral gastrointestinal infection which is very easily passed from one child to another via the fecal-oral route.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Severe itching, dry skin of either body or scalp if caused by head or body lice or scabies.
- Known or suspected communicable diseases.

*If the symptoms are caused by a diagnosed allergy and they can be managed enough that the child is comfortable and not at medical risk, they may attend.

Your child may return to RJDS when they are:

- well enough to participate in regular programming and routines
- past the required isolation days/infectious period of a diagnosed or suspected communicable disease
- symptom-free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for **at least 24 hours** except for a lingering runny nose and mild cough, as sometimes these symptoms last for weeks after an illness
 - depending on the circumstances, parents/guardians may be asked to keep their child home for longer than the minimum requirement

Important Notes:

- Please inform RJDS any time your child is unwell, along with symptoms and diagnoses whenever possible. This allows us to notice trends and signs of something going around, and in case extra, more particular precautions must be taken. Certain illnesses and symptoms may be communicated to the other families; however, children will never be identified in these notifications.
- If your child's illness is named on the BCCDC's list of Reportable Communicable Diseases, you must notify RJDS immediately and follow the BCCDC's guidelines for isolation and treatment. Any child who has not received their childhood vaccines for one of these illnesses must stay home until the exposure/outbreak has been declared over.

It is highly recommended to stay up-to-date on your child's immunizations, including the annual influenza vaccine and the Covid-19 vaccine, as long as your child is eligible.

Medication and Topical Creams

A *Permission to Administer Emergency Medication* form must be submitted along with a completed Medical Care Plan. All staff members are trained to administer an Epi-pen or asthma inhaler, if necessary. Medical Care Plans will be reviewed annually by caregivers and staff. Any medical treatment/administration of medication will be documented on the Administration of Medication Chart and kept in the child's folder.

Topical creams and non-prescription medication require permission forms before they can be administered by staff. Please ask the Program Director for the appropriate form, and note that non-prescription medication requires a physician's signature.

Important Note: All medications and creams must be provided in their original packaging. I.e: Do not pre-measure the doses. Staff are required to prepare the medication according to the prescribed directions, before administering it to a child.

Emergency Procedures

The Early Learning Centre's emergency procedures are guided by Richmond Jewish Day School's Emergency Preparedness Plan. The language in the following plan refers to K-7 students, however, the children in the Early Learning Centre would follow the same plan, except for the following exceptions during an evacuation:

1. Young children may be carried or pushed in one of our 4-person strollers.
2. One teacher leads the group, while another follows from the back. Any additional adults spread out throughout the group, keeping them together.

The school has implemented an Emergency Preparedness Plan. Please know that in the event of an emergency, our administration and staff will do their best to ensure everyone's safety and security. It is important for parents **not to call the school** in an emergency as the lines need to remain open for communication.

School Emergency and Telephone Communications Procedures

If the school switchboard is operational, the Telephone Tree will be set in motion as soon as the situation has been evaluated, information is available, and recommendations can be made to parents.

- In the event that the telephone lines are down, the school will use cellular telephones (and/or texts) to send out information, if possible, through the Telephone Tree or if needed to the local and national news stations regarding the status of Richmond Jewish Day School and its students.

Here is what Parents can do

- Wait to be contacted, by phone, for information dispersed through the Telephone Tree.
- Locate a battery-operated radio and tune into the news broadcasts in your area.
- A copy of the Richmond Jewish Day School Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the office for your review.

Fire, earthquake and lockdown drills are held monthly at the school. Safety systems include a fire signal alarm, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. In the event of a major disaster such as an earthquake, all children shall remain at school until released to parents or one of the designated adults listed on their emergency form. In the event of a disaster, students will be evacuated to the Sikh Temple, which is our designated safe area.

Fire Drill Procedure

When the warning sounds:

- Evacuate the building – Teachers direct students outside, calmly, in single file, through the nearest exit. All doors will be shut.
- Wait quietly away from the building at the outside assembly area – Each teacher will fill out their classroom fire drill attendance record and one member of the class will hand the slip to administration to report the class is outside and that everyone is accounted for.
- Return to class – Teachers direct students to return to the classroom.

Earthquake Drill Procedure

Step One When the warning sounds:

- Take cover - Everyone in the school takes cover under desks or tables.
- Face away from windows.
- Assume “crash” position on knees, heads down, hands clasped on back of neck, or head covered with book or jacket.
- Count aloud to 60. (Earthquakes rarely last longer than 60 seconds, and counting is calming).

Step Two

- Evacuate the school - Teachers direct students outside, calmly in single file. Students must wear shoes and put on jackets and assemble outside at the designated assembly area.
- Return to class - Teachers direct students to return to the classroom.

Note: During an earthquake, if students are on the way home, they should continue home. If they are on their way to school, they should continue to school and assemble in the designated area.

Lockdown Procedure

When the office announces “Lockdown,” teachers immediately lock their classroom doors and direct students to be quiet and huddle in the safest corner of the room below window level and away from any doors.

- Teachers quickly look into the hall from their classroom in order to get any students into the nearest classroom.
- Doors are locked and dead bolted.
- The door is not to be opened for anybody at this point until administration convinces you that it is all clear.
- Teachers do head count and inform students of gravity of the situation and the necessity to remain quiet and calm.
- Designated and available admin staff and office staff will quickly sweep washrooms and hallways and then enter a room that is locked with a deadbolt.
- Teachers who are on prep time and support staff will proceed to the nearest room with a deadbolt.
- We reiterate the importance of students and staff signing in and out when entering and leaving the building outside of regular hours.

- When police officers pound on your classroom door to determine if anybody is inside, do not open the door. Simply communicate that you are in there with students and whether everything is okay or not.
- It is extremely important for students and staff to get out of the hallways as soon as possible when “lockdown” is announced.

Injuries

Minor Injuries

Accidents and falls are an inevitable part of learning, growing and playing sometimes. At RJDS we do our best to minimize these risks but we do believe that children need to be able to push their personal boundaries and experience some risky play to encourage their development.

If a child has a minor injury such as a scrape or bruise, guardians are notified via phone call, e-mail, or in person, of the injury and the first aid treatment administered to them.

Minor Head Injuries

1. The parent/guardian or emergency contact will immediately be contacted, to be advised of the injury and that we are monitoring the child. It is up to the parent/guardian to determine if the child needs to be picked up at that time.
2. If the child’s condition changes/deteriorates and the child has not been picked up, then a follow-up phone call to advise the guardian will be made immediately, as well as a call to 9-1-1.
3. The child will need to be seen by a doctor and requires a doctor’s note before returning to the centre.

Serious Illness or Injuries

All staff are trained and certified to provide First Aid and CPR.

If for any reason we need to call 9-1-1, we will contact the child’s parent/guardian immediately by phone to advise them of the situation and notify them where they should meet the ambulance. If a guardian cannot be reached then we will call the emergency contact right away.

All injuries that require First Aid are logged by staff.



Staffing and Supervision

All of RJDS Early Learning Centre’s permanent staff members are certified Early Childhood Educators (ECE/IT/SN certified) or ECE Assistants. We prioritize high quality care by hiring experienced and passionate professionals with strong morals and respect for children’s rights. When regular staff are away, qualified substitutes and/or other school staff members cover their absence.

Each staff member has their own unique personality and skillset, which is vital to facilitating a well-rounded team. Each new staff member is trained to understand RJDS values and standards and is expected to follow through with all our policies and procedures.

Our top priority is the safety of your child. We go to great lengths to meet their individual needs, so a safe, secure and nurturing environment is provided. As communication between staff is essential to the safety of all children in our care, each staff member is equipped with a walkie-talkie when away from the building and we do a head count each time the children leave and enter our classroom as well as periodically throughout the day. Attendance records are checked regularly in order to be accurate at all times.

The Early Learning Centre has a secure, fenced-in outdoor play space for the children. We are also fortunate to have a beautiful school property to explore, which includes a community garden, a fruit orchard, and a grassy field. While the property is fenced-in and secured from public space and main roads, it is shared by K-7 grades and not specifically designed for young children. Whether just transferring between the facility and the children’s secure outdoor play space, or exploring the many natural areas of the property, extra attention is paid to keep the children safe from hazards.

From time to time, groups of children go on spontaneous short neighbourhood walks. The minimum staff-to-child ratio is always followed, and extra care and attention is considered to keep the children safe when away from the facility. Some of these extra steps may include hand holding, extra staff supervision, small groups, or using the 4-person strollers.

Minimum staff-to-child ratios for each age group/program are as follows:

Gan Aleph (0-3 year-olds)	1:4
Gan Bet (3-5 year-olds)	1:8

Guidance Policy

The Educators of RJDS Early Learning Centre practise positive guidance. With respect for the child in mind, we approach guidance with empathy and compassion. Here are some examples of what this looks like:

- Maintaining strong attachments between educators and the children so we can understand and meet their needs.
- Using observational statements, rather than personal opinions or bias, and never shaming children for their actions.
- Using techniques such as prevention and substitution, we can gently guide children away from harm and contentious situations.
- Providing positive language through role modelling helps the children learn how to find positive solutions.
- Adapting the environment and routine to meet the children's needs and avoid unnecessary conflict.
- Acknowledging children's feelings and helping them express themselves in appropriate ways.
- Focusing on the root of the problem, rather than just the behaviour or situation.
- Occasionally using controlled, logical consequences, but only as a means to keep children safe in the moment or to take a break and deal with the issue together without distractions – never as a form of punishment.
- Providing limited, appropriate options for the children to choose from, giving them opportunities to feel empowered and in control, within safe boundaries.

Abuse Policy

We ensure that no child enrolled in our program is subjected to emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect while under our care.

If there is any suspected form of child abuse, including but not limited to, neglect, spanking, putting them in unsafe situations, etc. we are governed by law to report this to the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. These steps are taken to protect the children and it is the responsibility of the MCFD to investigate the suspected abusive behaviour. Our #1 priority is the safety and well-being of all children in our program.

Inclusion Policy

The RJDS Early Learning Centre is committed to making all reasonable efforts towards inclusion, accommodating families of all backgrounds and children with diverse needs, where children of all abilities are able to participate meaningfully in all aspects of the program.

Procedures

If your child requires extra support, please contact the Director ahead of enrolment, so we can create a care plan on how to provide appropriate support. There are often long waitlists for public resources, so it is important to start this process as early as possible. These extra resources might include extra staffing, specialists, therapy, etc.

If the educators at RJDS have a concern about a child's development and/or behaviour, steps will be taken with the goal of providing optimal care and support for the child's individual needs. This is always a team effort with the child's family.

Some of these steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Documentation of incidents and/or concerning behaviour
- Suggestions to the family to seek medical assessments and/or supports
- Meetings and discussions with child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and health care professionals to create a care plan
- If applicable and reasonable, efforts to source funding for additional staffing to provide extra and individualized support for the child.

RJDS Early Learning Centre requires all employees to read and understand the inclusion policy and they are obligated to comply with the requirements and promote inclusion in the child care centre.

Inclusion Definitions

Inclusive Child Care supports individual strengths and makes accommodations for the needs of each child. Valuing and supporting each individual child, regardless of abilities, allows them to participate meaningfully in all aspects of the program. Efforts to support and accommodate in our inclusive program include but are not limited to:

- the reduction of physical barriers in the space
- the recruitment and retainment of qualified staff with experience in inclusive child care
- the creation and implementation of care plans
- connections with early intervention and family services
- children are given equitable access to all aspects of the program through play-based experiences



Equitable Access involves removing barriers and making accommodations for all children and families. Acknowledging the diverse needs and circumstances of each individual means different accommodations may be made for each situation.

Care Plans are official documents created by the child care provider and a parent/guardian of the child requiring support. Supported Child Care Development (SCDP) consultants and/or health care professionals may also help in the development of a care plan. The care plan outlines any relevant diagnoses made by health care professionals, the recommended guidance or intervention strategies for the child care provider and guardians, and any resources and accommodations for the program to ensure the child's safety and comfort.

Children with Extra/Additional Support Needs are experiencing, or at risk of, developmental delay or disability. A child with extra support needs may or may not have a diagnosis, however, they require support beyond that required by children in general. A care plan is created and implemented for a child with extra support needs.

Meaningful Participation means that a child's involvement and active engagement in an activity or experience is valued by everyone, including the child. Meaningful participation is more than being present in various environments and activities. Valuing and supporting the child by providing equitable access to experiences so the child can participate meaningfully is an important aspect of inclusion.

Anti-Bullying and Discrimination Policy

The following policy has taken portions of Richmond Jewish Day School's Anti-Bullying Policy, and amended the language to be more appropriate for the age of the children in the Early Learning Centre and the responsibilities of their families.

Richmond Jewish Day School is committed to providing a school-wide culture of inclusion and respect for difference that embraces all members of our family. No meaningful learning or personal growth can occur unless all staff, students, children and families feel safe, valued and free to express their authentic selves. It is essential that we are committed to protect everyone's physical safety, social connectedness, and from all forms of bullying and discrimination regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

In striving to maintain an environment in which all members of our school community feel connected, safe, and welcome, we ask all of our Richmond Jewish Day School family to act in ways that exemplify the qualities of *menschlichkeit* which include treating others with respect, kindness, and empathy. This policy applies to all family members while at school, at school-related activities, or other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment. It is important to note that young children are still learning about these expectations and have less self-regulation skills, therefore it is the responsibility of their caregivers to intervene when necessary.

Working Together

Everyone at Richmond Jewish Day School has a role to play to ensure that bullying and discrimination have no place in our school. Research shows that bullying of any kind is dramatically reduced when others stand up for someone being bullied. Jewish history has shown us the implications of standing idly by and not standing up for what is right. We ask all members of our Richmond Jewish Day School family to subscribe to the following four principles and to work together to keep bullying out of our school:

- Refrain from bullying of any kind, for any reason.
- Treat others with respect and kindness.
- Intervene, if it is safe. Or tell someone who can.
- Include instead of excluding or ignoring.



Communication and Involvement

Daily Communication

Please contact the teachers through our communication app, **Brightwheel**, if your child will be absent or arriving later than usual. The earlier you notify us, the better, as this information helps us plan our days.

Please also let us know about any significant events in the child's home life (ie: new home, sickness in the family, visitors, etc.), as this information provides us additional insight, which helps us assist a child with whatever may be impacting them.

If you ever have a sensitive subject you would like to discuss, we will always find a time to address your concerns. In the event that the concern is regarding a staff member, we ask that you first attempt to bring up the issue with the staff member in question, to give them the chance to clear up any possible miscommunication and with respect to transparency. However, if you feel uncomfortable with this, please speak with the Program Director or the Principal and we will do our best to ease your worries and find solutions.

As a family-centred school, RJDS encourages family involvement, and we do our best to incorporate any ideas that you may have into our celebrations. Please notify us ahead of time if you plan a visit, as unexpected visits can sometimes cause anxiety in the children or can interrupt the flow of the routine.

While you are in the classroom, whether to visit, volunteer or for pick up/drop off, **please respect the boundaries of the children** and seek a teacher's attention if you witness something of concern. Please also be mindful of **children's rights to privacy**, particularly regarding photos and other media. **Any images shared by the school that include other children should not be kept for personal use and should not be shared publicly without the parents' consent.** We also ask that you do not take photos or videos of other children while they are in our care.

Newsletters

Parent Newsletters (The Shofar) are sent to the entire school community via email on a weekly basis. The Early Learning Centre sends a monthly newsletter via Brightwheel. Please read these carefully, as important information and dates are communicated. Please visit the [school website](#) link for the latest school calendar, newsletters, recent news items, classroom updates and more.

Birthday Celebrations

When you are preparing to celebrate your child's birthday, please consider their classmates' feelings. If all children in a class are invited, invitations may be distributed at the school. If you are only inviting select individuals, we ask that you please distribute invitations directly to the children's homes or electronically.

In keeping with the Jewish objectives of our school, we urge parents not to hold birthday parties on Shabbat or holidays.

No family should be put in the position of having to choose between the observance of Shabbat and kashrut or attendance at a social function. Additionally, please make sure to find out if there are children in the class who keep kosher at home; we urge you to be in touch with those parents in advance and arrange for something kosher to be offered at the party.

An appropriate way to celebrate a birthday or any other simcha is by marking the occasion with the donation of a book or a contribution to a school fund or program. Please contact the office for more details.

Families have the option of celebrating their child's birthday and/or providing a treat to share with the class. Please refer to the Kosher Food Policy and the Food Allergy (Nut-Aware) Policy and notify your child's teachers in advance of your plans.

Parent Participation Program (PPP)

We believe that an effective school is one in which parents and the community support the school. Research shows that children have a more positive outlook at school when their parents are actively involved. Parents are encouraged to participate in various school activities by sharing their skills, talents, and time. We value all contributions which parents make as it enhances the educational experience for all our children. All K-7 families are required to complete a minimum of 25 Parent Participation Program hours annually. Families with only young children in our ELC program are expected to complete 12 hours only.

The Parent Participation Program serves two purposes:

- To teach students the value of community service by observing their parents and family members working for the good of their school and others.
- To minimize costs, reserve funds saved for school equipment and improvements, and keep tuition low.

Tracking Hours

RJDS uses an online tracking program, [Submit PPP Hours | Richmond Jewish Day School | RJDS.ca](#)) for parents to track their PPP hours. This system automates and simplifies the volunteer process. Each family will have their own unique password to log in where they can record their hours. Please contact PAC to access your login information. Recording should be an ongoing process to ensure accountability for your hours. The recording of volunteer hours will be based on an honour system and will be monitored regularly to ensure accuracy.

PPP Payments

If you have child(ren) only in the ELC, your volunteer requirement is reduced from 25 to 12 hours. If parents (or family members) are unable to complete the 12 hours by the end of June, a PPP payment of \$300 will be required.

Note: Pro-rated hours will be required for families who register their children at RJDS K-7 or ELC after December.



Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The primary purposes of a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) are to:

- Provide a forum for consultation between the school and parents on matters of general concern to the school community
- Assist with and contribute to various school related activities
- Promote the development of positive school community relations

All parents of the school are members of the Parent Advisory Council - a volunteer-based committee of RJDS Parents. We encourage you to attend our meetings along with the School Administration and PAC Executive. PAC works in a variety of ways for the benefit of students, staff and the school community. We aim to communicate with parents about school events and programs; communicate with school staff on behalf of parents; provide opportunities for parent education; raise funds for school equipment, projects, and activities; and to organize social events to promote the development of a healthy school community.

Please contact the PAC President, at rjds.pac@gmail.com for more information about PAC and how you can become more actively involved in the RJDS community.

Membership dues are just \$36 per year per family and should be paid by e-transfer to rjds.pac@gmail.com by no later than Sept 30th of each year.

Continuation of Service

We are committed to doing our absolute best at providing a caring and supportive environment for all children and families. With the understanding that our environment may not be suitable for everyone, there may be situations where accommodation is not possible, and we must insist that the child and their family leave the program.

Possible situations that may be cause for termination of care include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Unsafe Situations**
Physical, emotional, or verbal acts which result in placing your child, other children and their families, or teachers within the school in an emotional, physical, harmful, hurtful or unsafe situation.
- **Recurrent Late Pickup**
RJDS has exhausted all efforts to resolve problems of late pickup with a family.
- **Payment in Arrears**
Fees for service are not paid according to the signed Tuition Agreement form and successful resolution of differences cannot be achieved.
- **Change in Custody**
Custody status changes and the child's new custodial guardian wishes to withdraw.
- **Abuse and/or Harassment**
A family member harasses, threatens abuse or commits a violent act towards a staff member, child or other family involved at RJDS. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse and harassment from family members. In some cases, the first step (and at the discretion of the Director) may just involve prohibiting said family member from the premises and further communication with staff.

Children's Records/Information

All personal information received is kept confidential, filed away and locked. Personal information includes, but is not restricted to, registration forms, consent forms, and special care information. To keep the information accurate, parents/guardians are reminded to report any changes to the information that they submit during registration (address, phone numbers, emergency contact persons, alternate pickups, custody agreements, medical information, etc.) Our privacy protocols comply with the privacy legislation and the Provincial Child Care Regulation.