



## The Brody Family Early Learning Center

JCC of Central New Jersey 

2025-26 Guidebook



This guidebook has been compiled to provide information to all families and staff about the protocol and procedures at the Brody Family Early Learning Center.

We have overlaid our early learning philosophy and best practices on all procedures to bring your children an uncompromised school experience. In order to ensure that all important and relevant policy and procedure information is in one place, this document reviews existing protocol with all future updates being incorporated as needed.

Parents are required to read this guidebook and attest that they have done so and understand all information, policies and procedures as stated.



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# Curriculum and Learning Approach



We view children as competent and capable individuals who deserve to be a part of their learning journey. As such, we offer them opportunities and activities that will help them grow and develop their skills.

*Brit* - Covenant (Belonging and Commitment)

*K'dusha* - Holiness (Intentionality and Presence)

*Tzelem Elohim* - Divine Image (Dignity and Potential)

*Hitorerut* - Awakening (Amazement and Gratitude)

*Masa* - Journey (Reflection, Return and Renewal)

*Tikkun Olam* - Repair of the World (Responsibility)

*Drash* - Interpretation (Inquiry, Dialogue and Transmission)

These lenses guide us as we continue to explore best practices in early childhood pedagogy as well as guide and support our decision-making.

## Curriculum Framework

We believe that all children deserve a program that provides a safe and nurturing environment which promotes physical, social, emotional and cognitive development while responding to families' needs.

Our curriculum standards are based on and aligned with NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (Infants, Toddlers and Two Year Olds) and NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (Three Year Olds, Four Year Olds and Bridges Transitional Kindergarten).

Each class has a daily classroom schedule which includes morning meeting, small group learning, whole group activity, outdoor time, snack, lunch, rest (for all but Bridges and CBI Annex students), shared reading (storytime), music, art, sensory play and end-of-the-day closing and reflection.

### Weekly school activities include:

**Monday Morning Havdalah:** We separate the weekend and look forward to the week ahead with this beautiful ritual that includes singing and setting the tone for the week.

**Discover CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Children's Health):** A movement and non-competitive games program held in our gym or outdoors.

**Music:** A weekly scheduled activity where children sing, explore attributes of music and act out favorite stories.

**Shabbat:** We gather as a school to end our week together and celebrate Shabbat. Each week classes will invite parents to join us as Shabbat guests.

**Swim Instruction:** Each child in our 3s and 4s will participate in instructional swim. Our 3s swim for six weeks in the spring, and 4s and Bridges swim for six weeks in both the fall and spring.

**Wonderscape Outdoor Classroom:** Each class has the opportunity to spend two or more hours each week learning in our outdoor classroom space.



## Outdoor and Indoor Learning

Our school environment includes a beautiful outdoor learning and play space called Wonderscape. Wonderscape is an intentionally designed setting that invites the rich learning and play that happens in our classrooms to continue outdoors. There are several learning areas including music and movement, nature art, outdoor block exploration, sensory play, gardening and loose parts play – all of which encourage children to explore and interact with the natural world and use materials that will heighten and deepen their experience.

When connecting with their natural surroundings, children learn to appreciate the world and take responsibility for the earth (*Tikkun Olam* or Repair of the World). There are so many social and emotional learning opportunities to be found when we think this way.

We can imagine moments of *K'dusha* (Holiness) to be celebrated and marked by spending time outside. Imagine Shabbat singing with a breeze blowing or Havdalah in the snow. These types of transformative and “out of the ordinary” outdoor experiences deepen the value of each child’s time spent in school. We slow down and notice all that we have around us.

In this spirit, our students will be going outdoors in a variety of weather conditions.

Research indicates that children benefit from being outdoors as much as possible when they are together. Please refer to our clothing list on pages 14-15 for items that should be kept at school to accommodate changes in weather during the day. We ask that parents make sure that all children are well prepared for our outdoor activities. We anticipate that children will be outside for at least one hour daily. We will not learn or play outdoors when the temperature is dangerously low, in extreme heat or if there is a threat of a thunder/lightning storm, high winds or heavy rain.

## Block Curriculum

At the Brody Family Early Learning Center, block exploration is the heart of our Early Childhood classrooms. Research indicates that there are great benefits to children's development when they are engaged in block play experiences. On any given day, you can expect to see our children building, negotiating, engaging in dramatic play, problem solving, making decisions and choices, exploring scientific concepts and developing reflection skills. When children play with blocks, they are learning to use oral language, develop eye-hand coordination, create patterns, solve problems, think critically and make decisions and choices. Children will also explore engineering and design concepts while expanding their imaginations.

Even our youngest learners explore the properties and texture of blocks. Our infants begin to learn spatial awareness and pride as they stack their first set of blocks. Toddlers begin to understand the concept of cause and effect while our older preschoolers differentiate between size and shape and acquire an understanding of gravity, stability, weight and balance.

Children will begin block play with a class meeting to allow them and their teachers to plan their work. Once play begins, the teacher's role becomes part researcher, part facilitator and part co-constructor. After the play period ends, the class will have the opportunity to walk around the classroom and learn about the different structures. To close the experience, the children will hold a wrap-up meeting to plan for the next day.

Block exploration extends to the outdoors where children play with much larger blocks. These blocks foster large muscle work and alternative dramatic play. Outdoor blocks, which are heavier, require children to work and plan together.

Whether inside or out, teachers will be supporting children by observing and documenting their work, understanding the stages of block play, responding with thoughtful feedback, encouraging creativity and promoting a sense of curiosity.

## Classroom Organization and Environment

Our classrooms are designed as spacious learning centers, allowing the children to explore and make choices as they learn and play. Classrooms allow for small and large group activity and are designed to be flexible and peaceful.

Opportunities to explore materials in different parts of the room, along with spending time outdoors each day, help to foster learning in areas such as language, math, science and social development.

Throughout the day, children make both self-directed and guided choices as they participate in small and large groups. Teachers strive to build upon the thoughts and actions of the children while utilizing the curriculum to guide instruction.

Teachers have the flexibility to change the environment dependent on emerging interests of the children. Our rooms are outfitted with cots for resting and nap time. Each child (with the exception of Bridges and the CBI Annex) will be required to bring a one-piece sleeping bag/Rolle Pollee to use on their cots for resting. A bag for nap linens is also required.

The use of computers, TV and other video equipment is limited to educational and instructional use and is never used as a substitute for planned activities. Any content shown is age and developmentally appropriate.

## Jewish Learning, Holiday Celebrations and Values

Learning about Jewish traditions, culture and holidays is an integral part of the Brody Family Early Learning Center experience. We foster love of family and community as well as respect and appreciation for others through our Jewish heritage. Our Jewish lens *K'dusha* helps remind us of the holiness that surrounds us. Each Friday, we welcome Shabbat with song, ritual and meaning. It is a time to begin to relax, unwind, reflect and share time together as a school community. We recognize birthdays, celebrate upcoming holidays, observe Havdalah on Monday, appreciate nature, offer hopes and dreams and “Bring In The Light” of Shabbat in special ways. Our practices teach children about being part of a larger community and the world.

While we honor and appreciate all cultures, religions and backgrounds, and always look forward to hearing about children’s experiences outside of school, please note that we do not celebrate Halloween or Valentine’s Day at the JCC.

We also provide new and innovative ways to celebrate Jewish holidays with hallway displays and provocations that children explore and bring back into their classrooms. We endeavor to also provide home-school connections to Jewish culture and celebration.

Parents are invited and encouraged to be at Shabbat and certain holiday gatherings as volunteers and or guests.

## Transition

Transitioning back to school in the fall is not always an easy time for children and their families. Our team provides ample parent orientation to help prepare children to return to the school environment. Preparation for the first day should include a brief discussion about school, encouraging words about meeting new friends and the reassurance that mom/dad/caregiver will see the child when school is over each day. Letting children express how they feel the first few days and “seeing and hearing” their worries and fears will help them know that they are supported.

We believe in a balance. Too much emphasis and discussion about the first day of school may cause a child to be apprehensive. When parents are positive, excited and confident, children sense this and feel the same way. Helpful hint: Make sure that your child’s school routine (bedtime, breakfast, etc.) begins at least one week before school starts.

Here is what you can expect:

- An introductory phone call from your lead teacher in August.
- A school visiting day on September 3 with a scheduled time for you and your child to visit the classroom for 15-20 minutes.
- Support from our team to help your child enter the classroom with ease and comfort.
- Please follow your teacher’s instructions (based on the age of your child) for the morning routine. We ask that you try not to linger the first few days. Our staff will be in touch if there are any challenges that are not the normal transition that we would expect.

## Initial Separation

Our Early Childhood professionals understand that a child’s initial separation from home and from those with whom they are familiar is not always easy and might be challenging. However, it is an important first step and an exciting time in one’s growth and development, and we feel fortunate to share this significant transition experience with you and your child.

Beginning school is a time for children to make new friends and engage in peer play in new surroundings and with new materials. They will have many opportunities to learn about themselves in a social situation. It is our goal to work with you in successfully developing a relationship of trust and understanding before school begins and as we work through the first few weeks. Working as partners in guiding your child through this adventure is paramount to a successful transition from home to school.



## Identifying Challenges and Needs - The *Chesed* Process

At the Brody Family Early Learning Center, we are dedicated to nurturing the growth and development of every child. We recognize and celebrate that each child is unique, and some may benefit from additional accommodations in areas such as academics, cognitive, speech/language, gross and fine motor, social and emotional, self-help and behavioral. It is always our goal to work with each family individually to determine the most beneficial situation for each child so they can succeed at school.

If a child is in need of additional support to access learning or fully participate at school, the classroom educators, in partnership with the Early Childhood leadership team, will first implement classroom-based accommodations. Some examples of these accommodations may include, but are not limited to, use of a classroom picture schedule, simplifying instructions or use of a class-wide positive behavior support system.

If additional support is required, the leadership team will initiate the *Chesed* process. *Chesed*, which means loving kindness in Hebrew, is a team approach to providing student support which includes the classroom teachers, Early Childhood leadership and professionals from the JCC Inclusion and Support Services department, along with the child's parents and any outside therapists or professionals. As a team, this group will meet to discuss the child's areas of success and growth, areas of need, additional accommodations needed for learning and any potential next steps, such as therapeutic evaluations or interventions through a thoughtful and comprehensive intervention and referral services process.

If the JCC is unable to meet the child's needs through classroom accommodations, the JCC reserves the right, as part of the *Chesed* process, to refer a child for additional evaluations and/or therapy services. Referrals may include early Intervention, outpatient assessments or therapies and/or evaluation for special education and related services through the child's school district. Our comprehensive *Chesed* process will guide families through every step in partnership with JCC professionals. Once the initial set of recommendations are made and implemented, the group will stay in touch regularly to ensure the child's needs are being met.

A key to the success of the *Chesed* partnership is family/educator communication. If a teacher or Early Childhood leadership has concerns about your child's development, we will reach out to invite you in for a conversation. If you have concerns about your child's development, or if your child is completing any type of evaluation or participating in any type of therapy services, please inform your child's lead teacher and/or Early Childhood leadership. We look forward to partnering for a successful school year!

# Daily School Procedures



## Arrival and Dismissal



Arrival and Dismissal will take place at the classroom door in the hallway. Please note that we adhere to the drop-off and pick-up times to ensure that there are enough spaces in our parking lot to accommodate all of our families. If you need a bit more time, please take it.

### At the JCC

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Early Arrival

Drop off: Any time after 7:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Program

Drop off: 8:30 - 8:50 a.m. Pick up: 2:15 - 2:30 p.m.

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Program

Drop off: 8:30 - 8:50 a.m. Pick up: 4:15 - 4:30 p.m.

4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Late Stay

Pick up: Any time after 4:30 p.m.

Upon entering the JCC, please use your JCC swipe to open the interior set of doors and then re-swipe at the Member Services Desk. All members must bring their swipe each day.

If a babysitter or caregiver picks up on a regular basis, they must fill out a non-member access form and will be issued a non-member swipe to enter the JCC. They should also be entered as a guardian on Playground.

### At the CBI Annex

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Program

Drop off: 9:00 - 9:10 a.m. Pick up: 12:15 - 12:30 p.m.

### At the Sholom Annex

8:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. Program

Drop off: 8:15 - 8:30 a.m. Pick up: 4:00 - 4:15 p.m.

At both the CBI Annex and the Sholom Annex, security guards are positioned outside to welcome families into the buildings. Once inside, parents/guardians will bring their children directly to their respective classrooms.

## Attendance

If your child will be absent from school, please send a communication through the Playground app to notify your teacher no later than 8:00 a.m. Please also email Rachel Huber at [rhuber@jccnj.org](mailto:rhuber@jccnj.org). Your child's teacher will mark them absent. Be sure to include your child's name and reason for absence.

If your child is absent due to illness or communicable disease, they will be required to return with a doctor's note for re-admission.

## Late Arrival

If your child will be arriving at school later than the assigned drop-off time, please follow these important steps:

1. Notify your teacher through Playground.
2. When you notify us about the late arrival, please also let us know the approximate time your child will arrive.
3. Arrive at the JCC or either Annex, park your car and escort your child into the building. At the JCC, swipe in at the Member Services Desk in the front lobby, then proceed to the classroom with your child. At either Annex, you will be buzzed in and a staff member will escort you to the classroom.
4. In the best interest of your child and the continuity of the classroom, we ask that all children be dropped off before 12:00 p.m.

## Early Dismissal

1. Notify your teacher through Playground.
2. We ask that you schedule early pick-up in advance so that the teachers can be made aware of your expected arrival time at the classroom.
3. You may proceed directly to the classroom for early pick-up.



## Visitor Policy

No visitors/guests may confer with students in the school without the approval of the Director of Early Childhood; any such meeting may only take place in the presence of the classroom teacher and/or administrator.

All visitors must check in at the Member Services Desk each time they come to the JCC. A valid photo ID is to be scanned at the Member Services Desk, and a visitor tag will be printed to be worn throughout the JCC. Visitors will be buzzed into either Annex and their IDs will be checked.

## Birthdays

We are happy to help celebrate children's birthdays in school. Parents will be invited into the classroom as a Shabbat guest the week that the child will be celebrating their birthday in school.

On their actual birthday, we will be sure to sing Happy Birthday and recognize your child during Shabbat that week. You may also consider marking this special day with a book donation to our school library in honor of your child's special day. Here is a link to our Amazon book wish list <https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/20B5CF9MQPUPU>

We value healthy lifestyles in our school. Due to this philosophy and many food allergies in our school community, we do not allow any kind of treats to be brought from home.

You can also purchase a short happy birthday message to display for your child on our front lawn LED sign for \$18. Visit [www.jccnj.org](http://www.jccnj.org), log into your account and search LED.

## Toilet Learning

Our faculty and staff will work with a family's request to encourage a child to use the toilet when indicated, but will not pressure the child or permit frustration. While toilet training is not a responsibility of our staff, we will assist whenever possible. We will continue to diaper and change children's clothing until they are confident in their toileting skills.

Children are taken to the bathroom often, including prior to transitioning from one room to another.

## Fire Drills, Safety (Lockdown) Drills and Emergency Evacuation

Fire drills are practiced by the school and JCC once each month. Safety (lockdown) drills are also practiced throughout the year. In the event of an evacuation, students are escorted by staff to a planned emergency evacuation site. Parents are notified as soon as possible through the Playground app if an evacuation has occurred.

All teachers carry the children's emergency contact information with them at all times.

# Communication

## Technology and Social Media

The Brody Family Early Learning Center uses the Playground app to communicate with parents. We also post on the JCC website ([www.jccnj.org](http://www.jccnj.org)) to disseminate important information.

The school has a parent-run Facebook group that is created every year. Parents are invited to join and must be approved by the site administrator. This group is solely for informational purposes and utilized by school families and staff only. We ask that parents refrain from posting photographs or videos of children other than their own in this private group. The school also has a JCC-run Instagram page which features meaningful learning experiences and JCC events.

## Playground App

Communication with your child's teacher is simple and easy through the Playground app.

All parents will be invited to download Playground. You will receive classroom information as well as school-wide information via Playground. Our teachers and school administrators also have the ability to message you individually or as a class with this software.

The Playground app is the primary way school will communicate with you this year.

**SNOW OR EMERGENCY WEATHER CLOSINGS WILL BE COMMUNICATED THROUGH PLAYGROUND ONLY.**

## Phone Contact

School staff are not permitted to use their personal phones to communicate with parents. If you would like to speak to a teacher, you may call and leave a message in the Children's Services office (x227). Please include the date, your name and the best way to contact you in the late afternoon or early evening. Please do not call classrooms directly as teachers are engaged in instruction and supervision.

Unless you have indicated that it is urgent, teachers will return calls within 24 hours.



# Clothing and Personal Items

ALL PERSONAL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED. We recommend [www.mabelslabels.com](http://www.mabelslabels.com) for iron on/stick on labels with your child's first and last name. Our school benefits from the sale of these labels.

We recommend each child bring a small or medium sized backpack to school on the days that they need to bring rest items to and from home. There is typically not a need for a backpack every day but you may send one with your child if you choose.

As we continue to encourage independence, we prefer that children carry their own lunch boxes or backpacks when they are able to.

## Infant and Toddler Care

Please make sure that there are five extra changes of clothing at school for your child. Children's clothes will be changed if any excretions get on their clothes.

Please also send in several burp cloths and bibs to keep in the classroom. We prefer the soft plastic bibs that can be easily wiped and cleaned.

If your child's spare clothes are not used, they can remain in the classroom. We will send home any soiled clothes at the end of the day.

The classroom environment for infants and toddlers often includes soft toys. We realize the cleaning challenge this presents; however with a washer and dryer on the premises, the toys kept in the room will be cleaned after each use.

### Items to Leave at School

- 5 changes of clothes (shirts and pants)
- Sun hat or cap
- Raincoat or rain coverall
- Warm jacket or snowsuit
- 2 pairs of mittens (preferable to gloves)
- Warm socks, booties or snow boots
- Warm hat
- Extra sweatshirt
- Extra crib sheet/bedding (Pack 'n Play size)
- Extra Pacifiers if needed

## Children 2+

Most items that come to the school with your child will be sent home with them at the end of the day, including lunch boxes, drinking cups or Thermos containers, etc. Cups and Thermos containers must come with a closable lid. No glass containers should be sent to school.

Bedding will remain at the JCC for one week before it is sent home for cleaning. All families are responsible for providing a bag for nap bedding. If your child uses a "lovey" to nap, it must be sent in daily and washed each night. Your child may use it only at nap time.

Please do NOT send in any toys from home.

Children will need to have two changes of clothes in the classroom where they will remain in a sealed container in each child's cubby.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Children will be spending at least an hour of their day outdoors on a typical day.

### Items to Leave at School

- 2 changes of clothes (shirts and pants)
- Sun hat or cap
- Rain boots
- Raincoat or rain coverall
- Warm jacket or snowsuit
- Snowboots
- 2 pairs of mittens (preferable to gloves)
- Non-itchy wool or fleece socks
- Warm hat
- Extra sweatshirt
- A bag for nap blanket/linens
- Nap blanket for cot

(We recommend purchasing either Rollee Pollee or Wildkin.)

## Food

We offer a hot lunch program where families may order lunch by day for 4-5 month sessions. The menu will be sent home and will also be posted on Playground. Lunches may be ordered through our member portal (search SCHOOL LUNCH). There are no substitutions or additions to the offered menus. We will allow one week for changes (i.e., opt out or add on).

If your child is bringing lunch from home, lunches must be nut free\* and must be Kosher-style (no mixing of dairy and meat, no pork and no shellfish). All lunches brought from home must be clearly marked with the child's full name and room number. Our policy remains that there is no sharing of lunches or snacks due to allergies.

Lunches remain in the classroom so we recommend packing an ice pack in your child's lunch.

We provide snack each day.

Please send your child to school daily with a labeled reusable water bottle that can be refilled at our no-touch water fill stations. It will be sent home daily so that you may properly wash and sanitize it.

\*We are peanut/tree nut aware. In deference to our children with peanut/tree nut allergies, we request that no children bring nuts or nut butter in any form to school. Soy nut butter is a suggested alternative. Although we cannot promise that our school is totally nut-free in the purest sense, we do require vigilance and make it our responsibility to educate.

Cross-contamination occurs when a safe food comes in contact with a food allergen such as peanuts. For those children with severe food allergies, eating even the slightest trace of an allergic food can cause life-threatening or fatal reactions. Although not everyone with a food allergy is this sensitive, it is important to be very careful and follow precautions.



# Health Protocols and Procedures

## Overview



Our program is licensed by the NJ Department of Children and Families and thereby follows all licensing guidance.

If a child becomes ill during the school day, the school nurse will isolate the child, contact the parent, and the child must be picked up within an hour. (If parents are not available, emergency contacts will be called.)

Our program is licensed to serve healthy children and may not permit attendance of a child who has any of the illnesses or symptoms of illnesses listed below.

- Pain or discomfort
- Fever above 100.4° (temperature must be normal for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine before the child can return to school)
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult rapid breathing, severe coughing, sore throat
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavioral changes
- Weeping or bleeding skin lesions that have not been treated by a health care provider
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Stiff neck
- Swollen joints
- Blood in urine
- Vomiting (the child must be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to school)

A medical diagnosis from a health care provider provided to the school, in writing, indicating that the child poses no serious health risk to themselves or others is required prior to or upon return to the program.

When a child has been sent home for a possible contagious illness or contracts one of the excludable communicable diseases listed below, a note from the child's physician must be brought to school prior to or upon the child's return or the child will not be readmitted to school.

- Respiratory Illnesses: German Measles\*, Hemophilus Influenzae\*, Measles\*, Meningococcus\*, Mumps\*, Strep Throat, Tuberculosis\*, Whooping Cough
- Gastro intestinal Illnesses: Guardia Lamblia\*, Hepatitis A\*, Salmonella\*, Shigella\*, Campylobacter\*, Escherichia\*



- Contact Illnesses: Monkey Pox, Chicken Pox, Impetigo, Scabies, Shingles

\*Reportable diseases, as specified in NJAC 10:122-7.10.  
[www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable\\_disease\\_magnet.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf)

If your child is exposed to any reportable disease at school, you will be notified via email from the school nurse.

## Bacterial Illness

If a child requires antibiotic treatment for a bacterial illness (e.g., conjunctivitis, strep throat) they must be on their treatment for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school.

## COVID-19

If a student (ages 2 and over) or a staff member tests positive for COVID-19:

- **Stay Home:** If students or staff test positive for COVID-19 they must stay home for at least 24 hours.
- **Fever-Free:** Students and staff should remain at home until they are fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours and their symptoms are greatly improved. Students should be able to fully participate in classroom activities prior to returning to school.
- **Masking:** For people 2 years of age and up, masking upon return is recommended for 5 days following 24 hours fever free and 24 hours of symptoms greatly reduced, especially given our close interactions and high-risk individuals among students and staff.

Students who are under 2 and test positive will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Parents are asked to reach out to the school nurse to discuss their next steps.

### Reporting Illness

- **Illness Notification:** Parents must report all illnesses to the Health Office via Playground or [schoolnurse@jccnj.org](mailto:schoolnurse@jccnj.org). This helps us track and monitor/report outbreaks as required by the health department.

Please contact the school nurse via Playground at any time to discuss case-by-case questions or concerns.

This protocol is subject to change pending CDC guidelines.  
For current CDC Respiratory Virus Guidance, click [here](#).

## Gastrointestinal Illness

Diarrhea is characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours, or bloody diarrhea; if child has three loose bowel movements they will be sent home; the child must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.



## Influenza

There are mandated guidelines for children and staff who exhibit influenza-like illnesses (ILI). The new guidelines state that children with influenza like illness (ILI), defined as fever over 100.4° and cough and/or sore throat, must stay home for seven days from the onset of illness.

In order to return to school before the seven-day period ends, your child must be seen by a doctor or designated healthcare provider and they must state another medical diagnosis, (strep, sinus infection, etc.) more specific than just a virus, before they may return to school. The source of the virus must be identified. In any event, children should be fever-free for at least 24 hours without any fever-reducing medications before returning to school.

## Lice

If at any point during the school year you find or suspect evidence of lice or itching on the head/scalp/neck, please Playground message the school nurse immediately. School policy requires that a child be certified nit-free by a nit removal specialist or kept home for 24 hours for treatment and be certified nit-free upon returning to school. We are happy to provide a list of local lice specialists upon request.

## Medication

The JCC does not administer any medication to children without written or verbal permission from parents, with the exception of prescribed medications for allergic children (specifically, Benadryl and Epi-pens). Permission to Dispense Medication form and Allergy Action Plan form is on the paperwork section of the Playground app and must be returned by the start of school. Please contact the school nurse for details or questions.

## Skin Abnormality and/or Rash

A note signed by the child's healthcare provider is required for any skin abnormality and/or rash (e.g., molluscum, coxsackie). The note must include the diagnosis, plan of care (e.g., medicines, cream, ointments used at school and/or at home) and whether or not the condition is contagious.

Any open lesions or blisters must be scabbed and healing prior to return to school.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping to keep all of our students, staff and community healthy this coming school year.

## Promoting Healthy Hygiene

Children and adults must perform proper hand hygiene frequently and will wash their hands many times throughout the day, including:

- when entering classrooms
- returning from outdoor play
- before and after eating
- after using the bathroom

All staff members will have hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes in backpacks they will carry for adult use when they are not in the classroom.

In addition to the sinks in bathrooms, there will be hand sanitizing stations at arrival, in the Early Childhood hallway and in the Early Childhood outdoor space.



## Gloves

As in the past, we will continue to follow NJDOH guidelines regarding glove usage. Our staff will wear gloves when assisting children in the bathroom, when in contact with bodily fluids, when preparing food, when feeding children and during diaper changing.

## Sanitization

Our Operations and Facilities Department has established sanitization protocols and procedures based on regulatory guidelines.

All school facilities will be sanitized before, during and after school on regular schedules by trained staff who are supervised by shift supervisors responsible for overseeing all cleaning and disinfection.

Bathrooms will be cleaned every hour on an alternate basis so restrooms will always be available.

All HVAC system filters are regularly replaced, classroom radiators cleaned and new filters added. We adjust our HVAC unit settings to increase outdoor intake, and we increase unit run times in order to enhance indoor air quality. We work closely with our HVAC system provider to follow best practices.

All chemicals are appropriate for commercial use. We record all chemicals used in the building and identify if they are EPA-recognized. Additionally, all staff are trained to apply and clean appropriately per instructions.

## Nurse/Health Office

There will be a registered nurse onsite at the JCC during school hours. The nurses will also visit both Annex locations each morning.

Please check the Playground app and with the office staff to ensure that your emergency contacts are up-to-date.

# Important Policies

## Release of Children

Each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent(s) to take the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached.

A child shall not be released to a non-custodial parent unless the custodial parent specifically authorizes the JCC to release in writing. This written authorization, including name, address, and phone number of the non-custodial parent, shall be maintained in the child's file. If a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by a court order, the JCC shall secure documentation to that effect and maintain a copy on file.

The procedure to be followed by staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), as specified previously, fails to pick up a child at the time of the JCC's daily closing is as follows:

1. The child shall be supervised at all times.
2. Staff members will attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s).
3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to their parent(s) or authorized person(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the JCC, the staff member shall call the NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF) 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-877-NJABUSE) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) is able to pick up the child.

Procedure to be followed by a staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appear to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the Director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm released to such an individual:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual.
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternate person authorized by the parent(s).
3. If the JCC is unable to make alternative arrangements, as noted previously, a staff member shall call the DCF's 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-877-NJABUSE) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

# Discipline



Our approach to guiding children's behavior is one of respect and support. We are committed to helping children develop socially acceptable behaviors and do so through positive guidance.

Each child's development is a growth process, and it is not realistic to expect every child to be at the same stage based on chronological age. We work to create an environment that teaches children to behave in a responsible manner and establishes a foundation for mutual respect in the following ways:

- Setting realistic expectations for children's behavior
- Creating environments that nurture success and positive behavior
- Serving as appropriate role models
- Using natural and logical consequences for behavior
- Redirecting toward more appropriate behavior
- Encouraging cooperation, negotiation and problem solving

Discipline using punishment is inconsistent with our philosophy.

Positive guidance is not:

- Disciplining a child for failing to eat or sleep or for soiling themselves
- Hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment
- Using abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children
- Engaging in or inflicting any form of child abuse and/or neglect
- Withholding food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest or sleep
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for an inappropriately long period of time

## Disenrolling a Child

Our programs are designed to support children's growth and to challenge them as individuals, each with their own way of learning and sense of self in the world. We appreciate the diversity of characteristics and behaviors that each child brings to the JCC, and it is our goal to provide programming that is responsive to the various learning styles and needs of the children in our classrooms.

Although we work to create a child-centered approach to learning, there are occasions when a child's behavior may require a more suitable setting. Examples of such include:

- Endangerment of themselves, other children or anyone else at the JCC.
- Any situation in which the accommodations for the child's success and participation place an unrealistic expectation on the school and its resources, and a determination has been made that disenrollment is indicated.

Other reasons for termination of enrollment include but are not limited to:

- Delinquent payment of tuition or membership.
- Parent/guardian actions not in sync with our philosophy of parent partnerships including failure to abide by policies and procedures of the Early Childhood Department and the JCC and/or physical or verbal abuse of any children, faculty or anyone at the JCC.

After determination that remedial actions have not been successful, the child's parent will be advised verbally and in writing that a suspension or expulsion is necessary. In the case of a suspension, the parent will be informed about the length of suspension from school and what is required for the child or parent to return to the school. If the terms are not satisfied, permanent expulsion may be the result if the school makes the determination that the child is to be expelled. When appropriate, the school will set a future date of expulsion, allowing sufficient time for the family to seek alternative child care. The school may determine on a case by case basis if the situation will result in an immediate expulsion.

Causes for immediate expulsion include:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children

No child will be expelled due to a parent making a complaint to the Office of Licensing or questioning our school's administration on policies or procedures.

When a family desires to disenroll a child, written notification is required. If a family decides to disenroll their child the family is responsible for the deposit and tuition balance until their spot is filled.

A refund of unused tuition will occur only when a child has disenrolled because the JCC has determined that disenrollment is necessary.

## Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances shall not be used or stored in or on the grounds of the JCC without prior notification. The JCC shall post in the Early Childhood Office notice of any construction that will involve any hazardous substance. A fact sheet on hazardous substances will be made available.

## Injury and Risk Management

Faculty and staff are responsible for daily safety inspections of their classrooms and equipment.

Defective or damaged equipment will be removed and/or replaced as necessary. A particular concern regarding children's safety is the risk of strangulation associated with children's clothing and accessories that may become entangled with the equipment during play. Please refrain from dressing your children in any clothing or accessory that is tied around the neck or waist.

If your child does sustain an injury while in our care, an Accident/Injury Report will be completed and presented to the family upon pick-up. In the event of a more serious injury, we will contact you as soon as possible and continue to try until we reach either you or a designated emergency contact.

Whether or not we are able to reach you, the child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance in the event of a serious medical emergency.

## Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Those working with children are mandated to report signs of abuse and/or neglect, and are required by law to report cases to the appropriate state authorities if they have reasonable cause to believe or suspect that a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse and neglect.

The JCC will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. Our concern is always the protection of the child.

## Tuition and Payment

Annual JCC membership is required for registration for all Brody Family Early Learning Center programs.

Tuition rates for the 2025-26 school year are posted in the Early Childhood Services rates/registration section at [www.jccnj.org](http://www.jccnj.org). Payment may also be made over ten months and charged monthly. A late fee of \$25 will be assessed to all accounts that are past due for any Early Childhood Services program.

If a family decides to disenroll their child the family is responsible for the deposit and tuition balance until their spot is filled. A refund of unused tuition will occur only when a child has disenrolled because the JCC has determined that disenrollment is necessary.

The JCC makes every effort to ensure that no child is denied the opportunity to attend early childhood programs due to financial hardship. Scholarship applications may be obtained online at [www.jccnj.org](http://www.jccnj.org). All applications are confidential and will be given equal consideration by the Scholarship Committee. Limited funds are available. Applicants will be notified by mail if they are eligible for assistance. Jodi Hotra, JCC Membership Director, oversees this program. Her contact information is [jhotra@jccnj.org](mailto:jhotra@jccnj.org) or 908-889-8800 x235.