

PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

LOCATIONS: YST Preschool and YST Girls School are located at 425 Cleveland Avenue in Highland Park, NJ. YST Boys School is located at 71 Ethel Road West in Piscataway.

DAILY SCHEDULES:

PRESCHOOL:

- Monday –Thursday Nursery Full Day: 8:35 am -3:00 pm
- Monday - Thursday Kindergarten: 8:35 am -3:30 pm
- Friday dismissal for all Preschool classes is 1:30 p.m.

GIRLS SCHOOL:

- Monday –Thursday Grades Pre1A –5 8:35 am -3:30 pm
- Monday –Thursday Grades 6 –8 8:35 am -4:30 pm
- Friday Grades P1 – 5 1:30pm
- Friday Grades 6 – 8 12:30pm

BOYS SCHOOL:

- Sunday Grades 7 - 8 8:00 am*-12:15 pm
- Sunday Grades 1 - 6 9:00am - 12:15 pm
- Monday - Thursday Grades Pre1A – 3 8:35 am - 3:30 pm
- Monday - Thursday Grades 4 - 6 8:35 am - 4:30 pm
- Monday - Thursday Grades 7 - 8 7:30 am* - 5:00 pm
- Friday Grades P1 – 8 1:30pm

*Davening, followed by breakfast

ABSENCES: If a child will be absent from school for an extended period, it is important to notify the classroom teacher and/or the building principal. Likewise, if the parents plan to be away, or any sensitive home-related situation arises, please let the teachers know what changes to the child's normal schedule will be set in place.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL:

YST Girls and YST Preschool will be sharing the new campus on Cleveland avenue. However, it is important to note that each division will use a separate entrance. YST Girls entrance is located at the front of the building and is accessed from the first parking lot entrance. YST Preschool entrance is located around the side of the building and is accessed from the second parking lot entrance. Please use the correct entrance at all times.

YST Preschool: School starts at 8:35. The building will be open from 8:15 am for the early stay program. The early stay program has one adult supervising the children who arrive between 8:15 am and 8:35 am. Children arriving before 8:30 will be billed according to the preschool early stay program rates. For morning drop-off, parents should pull up in front of the **preschool gym entrance** and escort their child into the building. No child should enter or exit the building unescorted and children must always be handed over to a preschool staff member. Please wait for the staff member to acknowledge that she has noticed your child. For dismissal, preschool children who have elementary age siblings will be escorted by a preschool staff member to the girls' school entrance for carpool pick up. All other children will be dismissed from the preschool entrance.

YST Girls: School starts at 8:35. Students must be in school by 8:35. Classes begin at 8:40. The building will be open from 8:30 and students will be supervised in the gym. **There is no supervision before 8:30** Please do not drop your child off before 8:30. Students arriving after 8:40 need to check in with the front office and will be marked late.

Parents are requested to enter the parking lot and drive to the designated carpool lane. Students may not exit or enter the car until the car has pulled up at the school entrance. Please remain in the carpool line. Please do not park your car in the lot or on the street as this will slow down the dismissal process.

Students **with written consent** will be allowed to walk or bike home. This applies only when school is over. Please note that many of the nearby streets do not have sidewalks and walking can be unsafe. **Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion assumes no responsibility for students once they are off school premises. No student will be permitted to walk home under any circumstances during school hours.**

BIKES: YST Girls students who have written consent may bring a bike to school. Bike racks are available. Students are responsible to lock their bikes for safekeeping. Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion takes no responsibility for bikes. Absolutely no electric scooters, Segways, or other electric transportation will be permitted.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES: If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday in school, please contact the teacher to discuss the date and format of the party. Home prepared foods of any kind are not allowed. Any dairy item sent into school for distribution to the class must be *Cholov Yisroel*.

BUILDING VISITS: Any parent who enters the building must check in at the front office. Parents should never wander the school or enter any classroom in search of their children. The office staff will be happy to assist you in paging your children or delivering items that they need, such as forgotten lunches.

BUSING: All Pre1A - 8th grade students in YST Boys traveling from Edison or Highland Park are provided with busing that is reimbursed by the township. YST Girls students may sign up for busing for a yearly fee. Busing information for YST Girls will be sent out in August. The school makes a major effort to make sure that the bus runs are convenient, timely and properly supervised. We have been fortunate to generally have well qualified and caring bus drivers for our runs. If any child exhibits behavior that is deemed inappropriate, he/she will receive one warning. A second offense will result in the child being removed from the bus for a reasonable length of time. Please emphasize to your child that the atmosphere on the bus is meant to be relaxed and enjoyable. However, **every child must remain seated and buckled during the entire route.** Obviously, any physical aggression will not be tolerated and riding privileges will be

revoked. Any bus changes must be communicated to boysbus@ystnj.org or girlsbus@ystnj.org before 2:00 pm.

CARPOOLS: Students may only go home with designated carpools. Any carpool changes must be communicated to girlsbus@ystnj.org or preschoolinfo@ystnj.org before 2:00 pm.

DEVICE AND MEDIA USAGE: No cell phones, hand-held video games (i.e. Ipods, DSi), Ipads, Smart watches, MP3s, or any other electronic devices will be permitted in the school or on the bus. The school reserves the right to permanently confiscate above mentioned items. Cameras or MP3s with music-only capability are permitted in school **only** with express prior permission. The school reserves the right to confiscate any unauthorized cameras or MP3s. *Please note:* In the event that students are given permission to bring cameras to a school event, the camera may not be a cell phone.

Torah values and current recommendations from the American Psychological Association mandate that parents monitor their children's digital activity closely. This includes setting age-appropriate time limits, protecting sleep, and teaching children to use the internet safely. **The Yeshiva recommends that parents delay giving children cell phones and other devices as long as possible. Children should only have access to filtered devices. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that children not be allowed to visit homes in which their peers may have access to unsupervised, unfiltered devices.**

DRESS CODE: Appropriate school clothing is important to school decorum as it instills in the students a respectful attitude toward school. **Please make sure that your children adhere to the dress code. It will be strictly enforced.**

GIRLS:

Grades 1-6

All girls from first grade up are required to wear the school uniform.

The uniform consists of:

- School Plaid Jumpers (highly recommended for grades 1-2)
- School Plaid Skirts
- Solid Navy or Black Sweater or Velour Hoodie with School Logo
- White Shirts (Oxford Collar or Peter Pan Collar)
- Turtlenecks or Collared polo shirts (White, Hunter Green, Navy or Red)

Grades 7 - 8

- Navy uniform skirts
- Blue/white pinstriped uniform shirt or an oxford collar white shirt.
- Solid Navy or Black Sweater or Velour Hoodie with School Logo

Students are welcome to wear white shells under their uniform shirts for comfort and/or warmth. Colored shells are not permitted. Collarless T-shirts are not allowed.

Girls from 3rd grade and up must wear sleeves of elbow length and skirts that cover the knees. All girls must wear socks that **minimally** cover the ankle. Leggings must be solid navy or black **ONLY**. Open

backed footwear, such as clogs, is not permissible. All students in the girls' school must wear rubber soled footwear (i.e. sneakers) to participate in gym sessions. Make up or nail polish is not permitted.

BOYS: Grades 1-8

- Shirts: Must be with a collar. No pictures or words may be on the shirt. On Rosh Chodesh white shirts should be worn.
- Pants: Must be dark colored without colored stripes down the sides. Cargo pants, sweat-pants and jeans are not permitted. Boys of grades 2 and up are required to wear long pants.
- Footwear: Dark shoes or dark sneakers are encouraged. Open backed footwear, such as clogs or Crocs are not permissible. All children must come to school with socks (no ankle socks).
- Yarmulkas: No insignias
- Davening: All Bar Mitzvah boys must wear a jacket and hat during davening.

HEAD LICE EXAMINATION: Head lice are an annoying, but medically insignificant problem that may be found even in the cleanest of homes and schools. If you find lice or nits, please notify the school office so that classmates may be checked. **Any child found with lice will not be readmitted to school until all nits are removed.** Periodic head lice examinations are conducted by qualified nurses.

Please note: Every child must be checked for head lice before school starts. Details regarding dates and locations for head checks will be forthcoming in August.

LEAVING SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS: Children may NEVER walk home during school hours even with parental permission or a note. A parent of the child must sign the child out at the front office and escort the child home. No student may wait outside to be picked up during school hours. Parents must wait for their children at the front office and should not proceed to any classroom.

LUNCHES:

The school runs a lunch program through the Department of Agriculture. Free or reduced meals are offered based on income eligibility. Families that are not eligible may enroll and pay for lunch. Sign up information will be sent in August and January for each half of the school year. Students who are not enrolled in the lunch program should bring lunch from home.

- All lunches and snacks must be sent in a ready-to-eat form. Students will not have access to the microwave or boiled water
- The school will provide milk for lunch for all classes.
- Wednesday is "Meat" day. Please send in meat or pareve lunch that day. All other days, dairy or pareve lunch should be sent in. Please adhere to this schedule.

MEDICAL RECORDS: As of September 2019, Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion does not recognize the so-called "religious exemption" to NJ Board of Health requirements. The New Jersey Board of Health requires that a complete physical/immunization form be submitted for each child. These forms must be submitted before school starts. Please feel free to contact the school nurse with any questions regarding the required timeline of immunizations.

MEDICATIONS: Medication should be given at home, if at all possible. If it is necessary to send any prescription medication to school, the classroom teacher or school nurse must have a signed request from the parent indicating the

1. Child's Name
2. Name of Medication
3. Dosage
4. Appropriate time to administer the medicine.

Please note: Most pharmacies will, upon request, make up a special bottle for school dosages. This eliminates the necessity for the medication to be sent to and from school each day.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES: Communication between parents and teachers is paramount to a child's success in school. Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. If, for any reason, you wish to speak to your child's teacher:

- a) You are welcome to contact the teacher directly through the website. E-mail addresses can be found under the Faculty Tab on the school website OR
- b) You may call the office and leave a message for the teacher to contact you.

PARENT/VISITOR'S ATTIRE: Parents or visitors who come to school for any reason are asked to come attired in modest clothing that displays the proper respect for an institution of Torah learning.

REMOVING A CHILD FROM CLASS: No one may take a child out of class during the school day without signing the child out with the school secretary. If a child has after-school plans, he/she must have a note from home indicating that the child may be dismissed with someone other than the parent.

SICKNESS: Students who are showing signs of illness, including fever or vomiting, should not be sent to school. **IMPORTANT: Children must be fever free for a full 24 hours before returning to school. Children who have been diagnosed with strep must be on antibiotics for 12 hours before returning to school.** This policy will be strictly enforced by the school nurses and/or office staff.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS: In the event of a possible school cancellation due to snow, parents will be notified via email or text message.

SNACK/TREATS:

Yeshiva Shaarei Tzion recognizes the importance of encouraging healthy eating habits. The following guidelines should be carefully followed in preparing your children's snacks for school.

- All food products brought to school must carry a widely accepted kashrus supervision, e.g. OU, OK, Star-K, Kof K.
- All items meant for class distribution must be Cholov Yisroel.
- All items meant for class distribution must be store-bought (not homemade).
- All items meant for class distribution must be nut-free.
- All sodas and other caffeinated beverages are prohibited.
- Gum and candy are prohibited.
- No candy *pekalach* are allowed for birthday parties; birthdays can be celebrated by sending store-bought cupcakes or cake into school.
- Birthday parties are a special time for children but can be a difficult time for the child with food restrictions. If you would like to send in baked goods, please be careful about the ingredients, and make sure the ingredients label is prominently displayed. It would be especially helpful if you would let your child's teacher know a few days ahead of when you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, so that the food-allergic child can provide his/her own safe treat.
- Special occasions such as siyumim may warrant an exception to the no-candy/ soda rule.

SPORTS EQUIPMENT: Students may not bring hard balls, such as official baseballs, to school. **No bats may be brought from home – they will be supplied by the Yeshiva if and when necessary.** Any other sports equipment that students bring in, such as basketballs, may not be stored in the classrooms. They must be stored in the gym or lockers.