

# COVID-19 Prevention and Reopening Plan for

## Maimonides Educational Center



**For all Staff, Students, Parents and Visitors  
2020-2021 School Year**

**Safety First!**

**Please read this carefully to familiarize  
yourself with our safety protocol.**

**Based on guidelines from:**

**The CDC, Nassau County Department of Health,  
NYSED, Office of Children & Family Services  
and the Merrick School District**

**Dear JELC Families,**

We are preparing to reopen our preschool with the utmost care and consideration for the children, families, staff and general community's health and safety. We are providing you with the key information below about updated policies and procedures in order to ensure that school runs as smoothly as possible and everyone stays healthy and safe.

We are grateful for the input of experts who are advising us on the best course of action. With the ever-changing environment we are currently living in, and the unknowns of Covid-19, **all policies, procedures and schedules are subject to change at any time with or without notice.** After reading through this document, you will be directed to electronically sign a waiver.

Please know that we will do our best to continue to communicate with you regularly and appreciate your patience while we navigate reopening the JELC. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Your support is encouraging during this trying time.

We can't wait to see your children!

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Warmly,

Rabbi Shimon & Chanie Kramer  
Marianna Borets  
Jewish Early Learning Center

## IMPORTANT NOTES

*\* All procedures are based on the latest guidelines, recommendations and policies from the CDC, NYSED, OCFS and Nassau County Department of Health.*

*\*\*We will communicate with you via e-mail if there are any updates to this document or real-time pertinent information.*

*\*\*\*We will provide any communications and updates or real-time pertinent information in the language(s) spoken at home as needed.*

## NEW CLASSROOM REGULATIONS

### **Group sizes, spacing and staffing:**

- Group sizes are limited to not more than 15 students per group. Once students are assigned to a cohort, they will remain with their cohort throughout the day. Classrooms that hold more than 15 students will be reconfigured to hold cohorts that have 15 or less students so that students are only interacting with their cohort throughout the day. Any reconfiguration of classrooms will require approval by our state licensing agencies.
- Within each group, staff will keep students socializing in smaller groups as much as possible.
- We will try to keep as many activities as possible outdoors.
- At rest time (for toddler/nursery), cots will be spaced 6 feet apart and children will be aligned in alternating head-to-toe formation.
- Groups will not use the same space at the same time, such as the playground, unless significant barriers are in place with each cohort using a designated space.
- Spaces that will be used by more than one group during the day will be frequently sanitized and disinfected.
- Physical distancing for children and adults within the classroom and outdoors will be followed as best as possible.
- All in-person events and programs will be postponed or moved to a virtual platform until further notice.

### **Toys and other classroom materials:**

- There will be a limited number of toys and materials in the classroom in general, to reduce the risk of contact contamination. Any toys that cannot be sanitized will be removed.
- Sensory play will be done individually, rather than as a group.
- We will follow strict sanitizing procedures at the end of each day and take extra precaution with any materials that may have come into contact with children's saliva, mucus or any other bodily fluid. If toys have come into contact accordingly, they will be set aside until sanitized.
- A container labeled "used" will be placed in each classroom to facilitate separation of clean and played with toys. They will be cleaned and disinfected before reuse.
- Toys will be kept to a given classroom and not shared throughout the Facility as much as feasibly possible. Any equipment or toys that are more of a general nature and generally are shared between classes (ie lightbox, imagination playground, playground toys) will be

sanitized in between use.

### **Mask Policy:**

- Face masks must be worn by staff throughout the day. Parents must wear face masks at pick up/drop off.
- Toddler and Nursery students are not required to wear face masks unless they take a trip off school facilities. If you wish for your child to wear a face mask throughout the day, you must provide one and we will do our best to help keep it on your child.
- UPK students will be required to come to school in face masks. This includes Judaic enrichment and extended care. Our teachers will instruct the children in the proper way to wear masks and will encourage the children to keep them on. There will be plexiglass dividers on the tables for lunch and instructional time so the children can safely remove their face masks during these activities if they wish to do so. In addition, mask breaks will be provided to the children when they can properly socially distance themselves throughout the day.
- Children ages 2 and under may never wear face masks.
- Children with any breathing issues should not be wearing a face mask.

### **Fire Drill Policy:**

- Fire drills will take place monthly as usual. Each class will be assigned its own separate exit in order to maintain social distancing guidelines.
- As each class is required to practice exiting from 2 forms of egress, each class will practice exiting from an alternate exit each month, so they have practice using both exits.

### **Shelter in Place Policy:**

- Shelter in Place is generally practiced 3 times per year. Each class will practice sheltering in place in their own classroom (or section of the classroom), in order not to mix cohorts.

## **HYGIENE POLICY**

### **Hand Hygiene:**

- All staff and children will practice healthy hand washing hygiene upon arrival and throughout the day.
- Soap and water for 20 seconds (singing the handwashing song until the end of it) at each washing is recommended.
- Children will wash their hands more frequently, especially upon arrival, after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing, after outdoor play, after using the bathroom and before & after eating.
- Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be available throughout the facility so that staff can have easy access to sanitize their hands frequently.

### **Surfaces:**

- All classrooms, bathrooms, office spaces and kitchen will be deep cleaned and sanitized prior to opening.
- Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected more frequently during the day to help ensure your child's safety. This includes, but is not limited to: doorknobs, light switches,

classroom sink handles, countertops, toilets, tables, chairs, cots and cubbies.

- After students leave, each classroom will be cleaned and sanitized for the following day.
- A log is kept for each room so that staff can mark each time a surface was cleaned. Logs will be reviewed by the director to ensure compliance.
- Cleaning products are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes Covid-19.
- Cleaning materials are kept secure and out of reach of children.

### **Ventilation:**

- Our classrooms and multi-purpose room are equipped with a fresh air ventilation system, which ensures that fresh air from outside is constantly being circulated within our space.

## **EXTENDED CARE**

As per OCFS and DOH guidelines, cohorts are unable to mix during before and after care. We are making every effort to accommodate everyone's extended care needs as best as we can and will notify you if we cannot provide care for the hours that you requested. Please understand that we may not be able to accommodate new sign-ups during the school year, though we will make every effort to do so. As conditions improve and regulations change, we hope to be able to provide more flexibility in this area.

## **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

We are setting up the following procedures in order to limit the risk of exposure to and minimize the spread of Covid-19. Families, including guardians, siblings, parents, and caretakers will not be allowed to enter the Facility to minimize contact and gathering.

### **Drop Off:**

- Drop off will take place at designated outdoor areas, based on your child's assigned class. Please respect the 6-foot markings as you wait with your child.
- Arrival time will be spaced between 8:55 - 9:10 am or 10:15-10:25 am (depending on your child's class start time). Please wear a face mask and respect the 6-foot distance markings in order to socially distance yourself from other parents and staff.
- In order to eliminate the sharing of pen and paper, parents will be required to electronically sign in their child as well as submit an online screening form each morning at drop-off, during which they will need to answer the following questions (you will be given the information on where to do the electronic check-in and screening):
  1. *Have you had any known contact with a person confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 in the past 14 days?*
  2. *Are you currently experiencing ANY of the following symptoms - new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, or sore*

*throat; new loss of taste or smell?*

3. Have you tested positive for COVID-19 through a diagnostic test in the past 14 days?

- A staff member will be there to greet your child and will perform a hands- free temperature check and symptom screening before allowing your child to join their classroom.
- Reminder: Parents/guardians, siblings and/or caregivers are not to enter the facility, classrooms or play area to limit exposure and risk.
- Upon arrival, hand hygiene stations are set up for all children and staff, however washing hands with soap and water is always the preference.

### **Pick Up:**

- Dismissal will be spaced between 3:05-3:15 PM (Mon-Thurs) or 1:50- 2 PM (Toddler-Nursery Friday) or 2:05-2:15 (UPK Friday). Please wear a face mask and keep a 6- foot distance from other parents and staff, using the colored pavement markings as your guide.
- Pick up will take place at your child's designated group area. Please remember not to enter the facility or outdoor play area.
- If you need to pick up your child earlier, you may call the office at 516-833-3057 ext. 103.
- Again, you will be required to electronically sign your child out at pick-up.

## **HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICY**

- Mrs. Marianna Borets is the designated COVID-19 safety coordinator (administrator) whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the JELC reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or "new normal" levels.
- Signage will be placed around the facility with reminders to practice social distancing and follow new hygiene practices.
- Your child's immunizations must be up to date in order to attend school.
- Please take a temperature check at home prior to bringing your child/ren to the center.
- Parents should apply sun-screen on their child before school each day. Staff will assist your child in reapplying sun-screen as needed.
- Keep your child/ren home if they are showing any signs of symptoms or sickness.
- Any child with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, or an excessive runny nose, cough, or sneeze, will be sent home.
- If someone in the school tests positive for COVID-19, we will immediately notify

the Nassau County Department of Health and OCFS and will follow their guidelines as to the steps we will be required to take. We will also notify the parents and staff of any cohorts affected and whether any closure or quarantining is necessary, as there may be different guidance for each case.

- If a JELC student has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they will not be able to attend school and will stay at home until:
  - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
  - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine);
  - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath;
  - The child has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school;
  - The child has been cleared by the Department of Health/OCFS (our licensing agencies) to return.
- If a JELC student is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school:
  - Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours;
  - Has been diagnosed with another condition;
  - Has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- If a child shows symptoms while at school, they will be separated from their cohort and wait in an isolated room (under staff supervision) until a parent/guardian can pick them up. We ask that the child be picked up within 45 minutes.
- If you or a member of your household exhibits signs of COVID-19 or has been tested and is positive for the virus, your child may not return to the Facility for the duration of the quarantine.

### **WHAT TO BRING:**

- Besides the regular items needed for daily school use (listed in our regular handbook), no other bags, toys, or "lovies" from home will be allowed until further notice.

### **STAFF:**

- Staff will be trained in all updated policies and procedures before the children attend.

- Professional development training will be provided to ensure that all staff are trained in how to talk with and support students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- No staff shall work at JELC if showing any symptoms of illness.
- All staff will be screened & take their temperature daily upon arrival at our facility and as needed.
- All staff will be provided with PPE as needed.

## **VISITORS:**

- Non-essential visitors are not allowed to enter the JELC facility.
- In the case of a delivery, where there is no contact with others, a delivery person may drop off the items while wearing a face mask and keeping a 6 foot distance.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

Special education services will be provided in accordance with the student's IEP as developed by the Committee on Early Intervention/Preschool Special Education and will continue to operate in a push-in or pull-out model, as determined by each student's IEP.

- Service providers will also be screened & will have their temperature taken daily upon arrival at our facility and as needed.
- Service providers will also be required to sanitize any areas and equipment used for their services. In addition, if working with multiple students in a day, they will be required to wash their hands in between each student being seen.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

The JELC is committed to fostering a school environment that is warm, welcoming, supportive, inclusive and equitable for all students. We recognize that our students, staff and families are all experiencing unprecedented challenges as we navigate through a global pandemic, an economic recession and civic unrest.

- Social - emotional learning is an important component of our curriculum and a strong focus of our teachers as they begin the school year.
- The JELC employees are all trained yearly by Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline professionals. Conscious Discipline is a social-emotional intelligence system based on current brain research that teaches adults to respond, rather than react, to life events. It has proven to increase academic achievement, decrease problem behaviors and improve the quality of relationships between parent to child, student to student, teacher to student,



and between adults too. Using the core values of this methodology, the staff aims to be consciously aware of our disciplining tools, helping our students to develop healthy and strong social, emotional skills.

- Parents will be asked to complete a survey as part of the returning to school e-packet in which they are to list any social-emotional concerns they have for their child. Data obtained through this survey will be used by the JELC teachers to incorporate specific strategies to meet their students' needs.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS:**

- Kosher hot lunches will be provided by Hunkis.
- Lunches and snacks will be served as individual portions to each student, rather than 'family style'.
- Lunch will take place within the classroom. Seats and tables will be kept as far apart from each other as feasible. Students with allergies will be seated separately if needed. All students will wash their hands before and after eating. Sharing of food and drinks will not be allowed, and teachers will supervise as well as teach the children in this regard. In the UPK classrooms, there will be plexiglass dividers on the tables so the children can safely remove their face masks while eating.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

- Our central organization, Chabad Center for Jewish Life offers many resources to assist families during the Covid-19 pandemic, from food to financial assistance to counseling to covid/antibody testing and more. Parents can view the full list here: [chabadjewishlife.org/relief](http://chabadjewishlife.org/relief).
- The Merrick School District offers many resources for the community such as health and wellness, technology resources and more. Parents can view the full list here: <http://merrick.syntaxny.com/news/article.aspx?id=113518>
- Our school has created a committee comprised of parents, staff and administrators to review, implement and provide behavioral and emotional support services and programs needed by our families, staff, student body and community.
- If emotional support services are needed, we encourage our families, staff and community members to call Chabad's support hotline at 516-833-3057 ext. 282 and speak with Miriam Baruch LCSW.
- We will schedule parent/teacher/administrator virtual meetings to address ongoing concerns as needed.

## CLOSURE POLICY:

- If we experience an exposure or presumed exposure to COVID-19, we will immediately notify the Nassau County Department of Health and OCFS and follow their guidelines. We will inform you of the steps we will be taking as per their guidance.
- As we all learned from this Pandemic, there are certain circumstances that may result in unplanned school closures. Consequently, the JELC reserves the right to cancel its programs without prior notice, in accordance with the following:

Toddler and Nursery Program/Extended Care Program - If school closes for longer than two consecutive weeks at a given time, we will refund you fully for the remaining time of closure after those two weeks. If school will be closed for the month of June, then the prorated amount of your otherwise non-refundable deposit will be returned. We will try our best to provide a part-time virtual education program for the initial two weeks of closure. After the initial two weeks, you will receive your refund as outlined above, but optional virtual learning may be available at a separate cost.

Pre-K – Judaic Enrichment Program - If school closes for longer than two consecutive weeks at a given time, we will provide a 50% refund for the remaining time of closure after the initial two weeks, and virtual learning will be offered. If school will be closed for the month of June, then the prorated amount of your otherwise non-refundable deposit will be refunded by 50% as well.

UPK Program – If school closes due to Covid-19, virtual learning will be offered daily and attendance will be taken. Details of the virtual learning program can be found below in the UPK Continuity of Learning section.

## PAYMENT/CANCELLATION POLICIES

All payment and cancellation policies have been updated in our Parent Handbook (will be sent out with our back to school e-packet). All these policies will apply. Please contact us if you have any questions.

## TRAVEL:

As per the NYS Covid-19 Travel Advisory, if any family member/child participates in any travel outside New York within a state with either:

- a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average; or

- a positive test rate of higher than 10% over a seven-day rolling average, you and your child will be required to quarantine for a period of 14 days consistent with the Department of Health (DOH) regulations for quarantine, prior to your child returning to school.

We highly advise not traveling to any of the 'Covid hot spots' at this time. Please see the Covid-19 Travel Advisory for additional information by visiting <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>.

## WAIVER:

After reading through this plan, please review the waiver by [clicking here](#). You are required to electronically sign this waiver as part of confirming your child's registration at the JELC.

## UPK CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN

Even as we face the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the JELC is committed to providing a high standard of education for our UPK students, regardless of the setting. We believe students must have the opportunity to feel safe, engaged, and excited about their learning, whether in-person, remote, or some combination of the two. We have developed four plans to address the academic, social and emotional needs of our students. Each of our programs whether in-person, hybrid or remote, is aligned with the outcomes in the New York State Pre-K Foundation for the Common Core, provides instruction which is equitable and accessible to all students, and provides regular and substantive interaction between students and teachers.

Parents will be asked to complete a technology survey as part of the returning to school e-packet so that we can assess our JELC family's technology needs and provide them with assistance needed in the event that a remote/hybrid educational model is used.

In accordance with New York State mandates to provide continuity of learning for the 2020- 2021 school year, the JELC UPK has developed three educational models. Each model ensures high quality, rigorous, standards-based instruction that will meet students' academic needs and allow them to attain the learning standards in all curriculum areas:

- 1) **In-Person Educational Model:** Each class will be divided into cohorts. As explained above, once students are assigned to a cohort, they will remain within their cohort throughout the day along with their designated teacher. Supplies that are used daily will be kept in separate bins for each student, as feasible. Supply bins will be sent home in the event students must return to remote learning. Classroom furniture has been

minimized to allow tables to be placed at a general distance of at least four feet from each other.

- 2) **Remote Educational Model:** (Implemented only if schools are instructed to close by NYS Governor's orders, NYS Department of Health quarantine, or other potential temporary closure conditions.)

If the JELC must close whether for a short time due to a Covid outbreak or because of the Governor's orders, the UPK teachers will utilize Zoom for remote learning 5 days a week as well as send weekly agendas with follow up activities for their students. Teachers will be required to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are being met to the best of their ability with the remote model. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each Zoom class. School supplies and materials will be sent home or available for pick-up. Both Teachers and Teacher Assistants will reach out to the students and parents via telephone weekly to touch base. One on one zoom or telephone instruction/review will be offered to students as needed. Parents will be able to call the school using the regular school telephone number (516-833-3057 ext 103) and can email ([admin@jewishelc.org](mailto:admin@jewishelc.org)) if they need to contact the administration. If parents need to contact their teachers, they will be able to directly e-mail them or use the classroom communication/messaging platform. This contact information will be provided at the start of the school year.

Parent participation will be encouraged by setting up a schedule where parents sign up to be a secret reader or run an activity during a zoom session. Family projects will be assigned to foster family engagement at home.

Additionally, we will do our best to add virtual enrichment classes (ie: Music, Art, or Movement programs) for the students to take part in. The administrators and teachers will be in touch with each other on a daily basis and will continue to look for more ways to implement even more learning and support for our parent and student body as various needs arise.

- 3) **Hybrid Model:** The UPK may reopen using a Hybrid approach, in order to ease the students in at the start of the school year and to also allow time for deep cleaning and sanitizing one day per week. The approach we are looking at is to start the first week of school in virtual mode and keep every Friday virtual as well until further notice. The first week of virtual learning will also serve as a 'practice run' where we can work out all the 'kinks' associated with virtual learning, so that in the case that the school needs to switch to the remote learning model at any time during the school year, it will be a smoother transition for all the parents and students.

The UPK teachers will utilize Zoom for remote learning as well as send an agenda with

follow up activities for their students. Teachers will be required to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are being met to the best of their ability with the hybrid model. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each Zoom class. School supplies and materials will be sent home at an in-person orientation at the start of the school year or be available for pick-up. Both Teachers and Teacher Assistants will reach out to the students and parents via telephone weekly to touch base. One on one zoom or telephone instruction/review will be offered to students as needed. Parents will be able to call the school using the regular school telephone number (516-833-3057 ext 103) and can email ([admin@jewishelc.org](mailto:admin@jewishelc.org)) if they need to contact the administration. If parents need to contact their teachers, they will be able to directly e-mail them or use the classroom communication/messaging platform. This contact information will be provided at the start of the school year.

- 4) **Alternate Voluntary Remote Learning Program:** (not to be confused with the Remote Educational Model) We will offer a limited capacity alternate voluntary remote learning option for students and families who are unable or uncomfortable to attend in-person instruction when in-person learning takes place.

The Alternate Voluntary Remote Learning Program will likely include approximately one-two hours of daily instruction with their assigned teacher and daily/weekly assignments utilizing available online resources. This program would require a minimum number of student participation.