

Welcome to Our Preschool: A Parent Handbook



Temple Shalom Preschool

Located at:

4630 PINE RIDGE ROAD
NAPLES, FLORIDA 34119

Phone: 239-455-3227
FAX: 239-455-4361
preschool@naplestemple.org

www.templeshalompreschool.org

Love the learning. Live the values.

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Welcome to Our Preschool: Mission, Philosophy, and Core Values

Welcome to our Preschool Family! Located in Naples Florida, our school community serves children from 3 months to 5 years old, providing a nurturing start to lifelong learning. We believe early education shapes the foundation for a child's future. Our mission is to create a safe, inspiring, and inclusive environment where every child feels valued, empowered, and encouraged to explore their world.

Our philosophy centers on play-based, hands-on learning. We respect and embrace every child's individuality, cultural background, and developmental stage. Our teachers foster curiosity, creativity, and emotional intelligence through responsive interactions and purposeful activities. We encourage children to ask questions, solve problems, and express themselves through multiple modalities — including art, movement, music, and language.

At our preschool, our core values are at the heart of everything we do. We believe that respect is crucial in creating a positive and inclusive environment for all. We value each and every child, family, and staff member as individuals and make sure to honor their unique backgrounds and needs. This creates a sense of belonging and acceptance, allowing everyone to thrive and grow.

Kindness is another one of our core values that guides us in every interaction. We believe in modeling empathy, compassion, and cooperation to create a nurturing and supportive community. Our goal is to instill these values in our students, so they can carry them with them throughout their lives. Additionally, we prioritize safety in all aspects of our preschool experience. We understand that physical and emotional safety are non-negotiable priorities for both children and families. We strive to create a secure and welcoming environment where everyone feels protected and cared for. Our focus on growth also sets us apart. We are committed to supporting children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development at every stage. We provide a well-rounded curriculum that promotes learning and growth in all areas, ensuring that each child reaches their full potential. Finally, we strongly believe in the importance of family-school collaboration. We recognize that families play a crucial role in a child's well-being and success, and we strive to work together with parents to create a strong partnership. By working together, we can provide the best possible experience for our students and their families.

We welcome families of all backgrounds and religions into our program. Our program is rooted in Jewish values and teachings, which are woven into every aspect of our curriculum. We believe that these values, such as tikkun olam (repairing the world) and tzedakah (charity), are universal and can be embraced by families of all backgrounds and religions. By incorporating Jewish teachings into our program, we aim to instill a sense of community, compassion, and social responsibility in all of our students, regardless of their religious affiliation. As part of our curriculum, we do celebrate Jewish holidays such as Hanukkah, Passover, and Rosh Hashanah.

At our preschool, children experience a joyful, supportive community where learning is an adventure. Thank you for trusting us with your child — let’s partner together for a wonderful journey!

Our Core Values at a Glance



Respect & Kindness

We treat every child and family with warmth and dignity, fostering a culture of inclusivity and support.



Safety First

Our commitment to health and safety is unwavering, ensuring all children feel secure and cared for every day.



Growth & Discovery

We believe in inspiring a lifelong love for learning through exploration, creativity, and meaningful relationships.

NON-DISCRIMINATION and CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Temple Shalom Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of any religion, race, national or ethnic origin. All children and families are entitled to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available at school. Temple Shalom Preschool will maintain the confidentiality of all student records as required or permitted by law. Any information collected, such as health and safety data
or custody court orders, is used for the benefit of the child's educational development. No one has immediate access to student files except authorized staff. Files are kept in the administrative office and are locked in a file cabinet.

Temple Shalom Preschool will not release any portion of a child's file without the unanimous written consent from the child's parents and/or all adults who are legally responsible for the child, or unless required by law. If you wish information to be shared with another program, we must have written consent. A child's file may be released pursuant to a court order or subpoena. Our regulatory authority, the Florida Department of Children and Families, upon request may review children's files.

Enrollment Process: Registration, Required Documents, and Orientation

We are thrilled you are considering joining our preschool community! Our enrollment process is designed to be clear and supportive from start to finish. We welcome families of all backgrounds and provide guidance every step of the way.

Enrollment is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration is complete when accompanied by the completed application and the tuition deposit. The tuition deposit and tuition are non-refundable. No credit is given for family vacations, holidays, illness, or early withdrawals, and days may not be swapped. Refunds are not given for any reason or exception. What this means in practice: because the system is first-come, first-served, submitting your completed application and deposit promptly is the most reliable way to secure your preferred program or schedule. Note that the preschool considers registration complete only when both items—the application and the tuition deposit—are received together. Submitting one without the other may delay placement and risk losing priority, especially during high-demand periods.The non-refundable nature of deposits and tuition is central to planning and staffing. Families should enroll only once they are confident in their choice of program and timing. The policy that no credit is given for family vacations, holidays, illness, or early withdrawals—and that days may not be swapped—ensures fairness and program stability. It is important to plan vacations around the school calendar when possible, and to understand that missed days cannot be exchanged or credited later. Similarly, refunds are not issued for any reason or exception, so please review schedules and commitments carefully before completing registration. We operate on a school year calendar, beginning in August and concluding in May. We will accept mid-year enrollments if there is space available. If a classroom is full, your child's name will be added to our waitlist.

Required documents for enrollment in our Florida preschool include, but may not be limited to;

- Completed registration form
- Up-to-date immunization record (Florida DH 680 form)
- Recent physical examination (Florida DH 3040 form)
- Emergency contact list and parental consent forms
- Documentation if applicable: custody or guardianship papers, allergy or medication action plans.

Once your paperwork is reviewed and accepted, we will contact you to confirm your child's placement. You will then receive an invitation to our orientation (Open House) session, where you will meet our teachers and learn about daily routines, family expectations, and ways to get involved. Open House also includes a classroom tour and an opportunity for children to explore their new environment. This is typically held in August, prior to the start of school year programming.

Our goal is to ensure smooth transitions for every family. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our administrative team with any questions during the enrollment journey.

Documentation, Health Forms, and Deadlines

During the summer months, a packet of information and forms will be sent home. The due date for return of these forms, including the health forms and the current immunization records signed by the child's physician, is ten business days before the first day of school. If we do not have an updated form prior to or by the expiration date, your child will be required to stay home until we receive the updated forms. These requirements are designed to keep all children safe, to comply with licensing and public health regulations, and to ensure that the preschool can maintain accurate, up-to-date records for every student enrolled.

A child cannot attend Temple Shalom Preschool without the most up-to-date health forms on file. This means families should track physician appointments well ahead of the school start date, verify that immunization records are current, and leave time for any necessary updates or signatures. If your child's last well-visit or immunization schedule falls close to the start of school, communicate with your pediatrician early to make sure the signed records will be available in time. The ten business-day deadline is firm and calculated to give the school time to review each submission and to follow up on anything that appears incomplete or out of date.

All children attending the Temple Shalom Preschool must be immunized. Delayed schedules are accepted when accompanied by a doctor's note. If your family anticipates a physician-directed delay, please obtain the written documentation as early as possible and submit it with your forms. The school relies on official medical guidance to document any exemptions appropriately. This careful documentation process supports the health of the entire community and keeps the preschool in full compliance with applicable regulations. If documentation expires during the school year, updated forms will be required immediately to continue attendance. Religious exemptions are not accepted.

To keep everything on track, many families assemble a simple checklist: schedule the pediatric appointment, request signed immunization records, complete all pages of the school packet, and submit everything at least ten business days before the first day. Retain copies of what you submit so you can quickly respond if the office requests clarification. If any form is missing or out of date by the deadline, the school is obligated to delay attendance until the corrected documentation is received, so proactive planning is essential.

Checklist: What You'll Need to Enroll



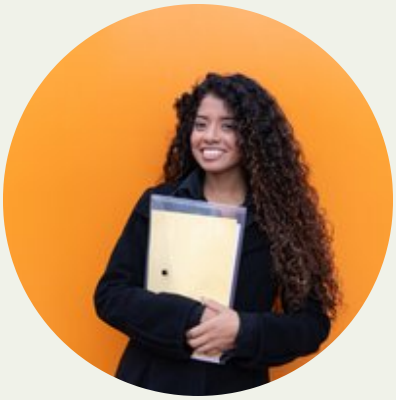
Registration Form

Fill out our preschool registration form to begin your child's adventure with us.



Immunization Records

Submit up-to-date vaccination records as required by Florida law to ensure a healthy environment for all. We do not accept religious exemptions. We will accept a delayed immuniztion schedule with a Physician's documentation.



Physical Exam & Documents

Provide proof of a recent health check-up and any qualifying legal or medical documents for your child's file.

Action Steps and Timeline for Families

Gather your registration materials so you can submit the completed application and tuition deposit together. Because the process is first-come, first-served, prepare these items in advance of your enrollment window. Next, schedule your child's well-visit if needed and request physician-signed immunization records. Then, watch for the summer information packet and complete every page carefully. Lastly, return all forms by the deadline—ten business days before the first day of school—to ensure uninterrupted attendance from day one.

Key reminders drawn directly from the program's policies: Registration is complete when accompanied by the completed application and the tuition deposit. The tuition deposit and tuition are non-refundable. No credit is given for family vacations, holidays, illness, or early withdrawals, and days may not be swapped. Refunds are not given for any reason or exception. During the summer months, a packet of information and forms will be sent home, and the due date for return—including health forms and current immunization records signed by the child's physician—is ten business days before the first day of school. If updated forms are not received prior to or by the expiration date, the child will be required to stay home until the updated forms arrive. A child cannot attend Temple Shalom Preschool without the most up-to-date health forms on file. All children must be immunized; medical exemptions and delayed schedules are accepted when accompanied by a doctor's note.

If you have questions about how priority is applied or when community enrollment begins, reach out to the preschool office early. Slots can fill quickly once priority windows open, so timely action is essential. For health forms, confirm your pediatrician's turnaround time for signed records—some practices can take several business days. Keep digital and paper copies of everything you submit, and mark your calendar to re-verify forms mid-year if your child's immunizations are due for an update. By following these steps, families can move smoothly from planning to attendance, confident that all program requirements have been met in full.

Daily Operations: Drop-off, Pick-up, Hours, and Attendance Policies

Smooth daily operations ensure your child's safety and create a welcoming start and end to each day. Our school is open from 7:30 am and closes at 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. We offer various schedules to choose from including Partial Day, Full Day, Extended Day, and 3 or 5 day a week programs. Please note that our VPK program is a four day a week schedule.

Morning drop-off occurs at the preschool entrance, where a staff member will greet you and escort your child inside. If you have a child enrolled in the infant classroom, you will be allowed to walk your child(ren) in. We have security personel on site during our operating hours.

Timely pick-up is crucial for your child's sense of security and for respecting staff schedules. A late fee of $20 will be assessed for children not picked up by 5:35 pm.There is a 5 minute grace period. We understand that emergencies happen — in rare instances, please call us promptly so we can reassure your child and plan accordingly.

Regular attendance is key to a successful preschool experience. Please call us if your child will be absent. Extended absences should be discussed with administration to preserve enrollment eligibility. Our staff values routines and strives to create a reliably structured day for every child.

School Closings

Temple Shalom Preschool follows the Collier County Public Schools calendar with some modification. We observe all Jewish holidays and are closed on those dates. In the event of inclement weather or a weather emergency, Temple Shalom Preschool will follow the decision of the Collier County School Board regarding school closings. Listen to your local news station for the appropriate announcements. Lee County decisions will not affect Temple Shalom Preschool. School closings will be posted on the Temple Shalom website, naplestemple.org.

Closings will also be communicated via our parent communication application. You may also call the Preschool office if you are not sure if school is closed as there will be a message with the necessary information.



Holiday Celebrations

As part of a Jewish Temple, we celebrate the Jewish holidays in addition to a variety of secular and national holidays, such as the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving. We understand that families celebrate religious holidays at home. Please do not bring holiday cookies, costumes, or other items related to Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, etc. to school.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are really special for young children, and we want to celebrate with the family and the child's classmates! Please read and follow the guidelines for birthday celebrations. We ask that parents be ever mindful of our nut-free policy. You may send in store-bought foods, in packaging that does not say "may have been manufactured in a facility that processes nuts or nut products." We ask that parents remain mindful that we are a health conscious campus and to refrain from sending in sugary treats. We recommend a fruit platter, mini muffins without frosting, yogurt, or please consider a celebration that is non-food related, such as a game or activity for the class.

We do not serve children the following foods: nuts, popcorn*, pretzels*, or any items where the packaging says "may have been manufactured in a facility that processes nuts or nut products." NOT permitted: gum, candy, gifts, balloons, professional entertainment. For the Cubs two year olds, we ask that you NOT bring party favors, small toys, or other items that may be possible choking hazards.

Party invitations for out-of-school parties may be distributed at school if all children in the class will be receiving one.

*Acceptable for Pre-K only

Curriculum Overview: Learning Approaches, Age-Specific Programs, and Special Activities

Our curriculum is designed to nurture the intellectual, social, and physical development of every child. We use a blended approach that combines play-based exploration, project work, and teacher-guided instruction. Our philosophy recognizes that learning happens everywhere, all the time — in the classroom, on the playground, and even at snack time.

Infant and toddler programs (3 months–2 years) focus on sensory experiences, nurturing routines, and first social interactions. Our preschool classrooms (ages 2–5) emphasize language development, early literacy, creative arts, math readiness, and science discovery. Activities are tailored to each age group’s interests and abilities.

Special activities include daily outdoor time, music and movement sessions, story hours, gardening, Hebrew and Spanish lessons and seasonal celebrations. Our teachers encourage children to express themselves through art, block building, dramatic play, and imaginative exploration. These experiences help foster critical thinking skills, confidence, and a love of learning.

Family engagement is central to our teaching philosophy. We have various opportunities for parents to participate in classroom projects, and celebrate special occasions. Our goal is for each child to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally — preparing them for elementary school and beyond.

We ask that you refrain from sending in toys from home. We do not want a child's special item to be lost or broken at school. The exception to this would be “Show and Tell Days” that will be predetermined by your child's teacher.

Toys From Home

To help maintain a safe, focused, and inclusive learning environment, students are discouraged from bringing toys from home to school.

Toys brought from home can become distracting during instructional time, may lead to disagreements among students, and can be lost, damaged, or broken. The school cannot be responsible for the care, replacement, or repair of personal toys.

Students should leave all toys, collectibles, stuffed animals, trading cards, and similar personal items at home unless they are specifically requested by the teacher for a classroom activity, special event, or designated sharing day.

If a toy is brought to school without prior permission, staff may ask the student to place it in their backpack or a safe location until the end of the school day. Repeated instances may require communication with parents or guardians to ensure the policy is followed.

We appreciate the support of families in helping students come to school prepared to learn with only the materials needed for the school day.

Classroom Groupings

The following lists our class groupings
and the required birthdate deadline for your child to be placed in that respective class:

Ducklings- children turning one by
September 1 (no bottles or pacifiers)

Cubs – children turning two on or before
September 1 (no bottles or pacifiers)

Lions* – children turning three on or
before September 1 (must be toilet trained)

VPK- children turning four on or before September 1

**Children in the Lions three year old group are expected to be completely and fully toilet-trained. The child must be able to clearly verbalize needs and be able to independently handle all toileting chores unassisted. Diapers are not permissible in the Lions classrooms, nor are pacifiers or sippy cups.*

VPK
- children turning four years old on or before September 1



Special Activities Highlight



Gardening

Children enjoy weekly hands-on activities to connect with the natural world and learn about plants and animals.



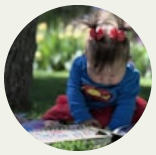
Music & Movement

Group music sessions nurture coordination, rhythm, and joy through singing, dancing, and playing simple instruments.



Storytime & Celebrations

Weekly story hours and seasonal celebrations foster imagination, literacy, and a vibrant school community.



Hebrew and Spanish Lessons

Weekly Hebrew and options for Spanish lessons..



Kef Shalom

Weekly physical education built into each child's schedule.



Shabbat and Challah Braiding

Once a week, we make fresh challah. Parents are invited to come in to help braid the dough with their children.



Jewish Art History is open to our Lions and VPK classes

Health and Safety: Immunization & Illness Policy

We prioritize the health and well-being of all the children in our care. In order to comply with the regulations set by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), we require all parents to submit the necessary health forms for their child. These forms include a completed health examination form, which must be filled out by a licensed physician and include information on the child's medical history, current health status, and any necessary treatments or medications. Additionally, we also require proof of current immunizations, as outlined by the DCF, to ensure that all children are protected against preventable diseases. By following these guidelines, we can ensure the health and well-being of all the children in our care.

Our health policy states that children must stay home from school if experiencing a fever of 100.7 or higher. A child must also remain home if presenting with colored dischared from the eyes or nose, unexplained rash on body, persistent sneeze or cough, or experiencing vomiting or diarrhea. Common childhood illnesses where a child must remain home until cleared by a physician include but are not limited to: strep throat, flu, ear infections, covid, hand foot and mouth disease, and conjunctivitis. A child must also be fever and symptom free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school. This is to ensure that the child is no longer contagious and has had enough time to fully recover from their illness. By following this policy, we are not only protecting the health of our students, but also the health of our staff and other students in the school.

In addition to staying home when sick, our health policy also emphasizes the importance of a child being well enough to participate in daily activities. If your child is appearing lethargic or overly tired, we may ask you to pick them up.

We understand that it can be inconvenient for parents to have to pick up their child from school unexpectedly, but the health and safety of all students is our top priority. If a child is sent home due to illness, we ask that you or another authorized adult pick the child up within one hour. We then ask that they remain at home until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

This is to ensure that they have fully recovered and are not at risk of spreading any contagious illnesses to others. We also encourage parents to seek medical advice if their child's symptoms persist or worsen. There may be certain instances where administration will ask for a doctor or physician note indicating that the child is well enough to return to school.

By following this policy, we can maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students and staff at our school.



Head Lice

Head lice can be a common issue in schools and other community settings where children are in close contact with one another. To ensure the health and well-being of our students and staff, we have implemented a strict head lice policy in our school. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken in the event of a head lice infestation, as well as preventative measures to minimize the spread of lice.

In the event that a student is found to have head lice, they will be sent home immediately and will not be allowed to return to school until they have been treated and are lice-free. Furthermore, we ask that all parents and guardians regularly check their child's hair for lice and nits (lice eggs) and inform the school if they find any. This will help us to quickly identify and address any potential infestations. We also encourage open communication between parents and the school regarding head lice, as it is important to work together to prevent the spread of lice and maintain a healthy learning environment for all students.

Our Biting Policy

Our program's biting policy takes into consideration the age and developmental level of the children involved in the biting incident. For younger children, it is important to understand that biting is a natural behavior and is often a way for them to communicate their needs or express their emotions. Therefore, a gentle and understanding approach will be taken when addressing biting incidents. We focus on teaching alternative ways for children to express themselves and provide them with the necessary support and guidance to learn appropriate behavior.

Young children may bite for a variety of reasons, including frustration, teething, and exploration. At a young age, children are still developing their communication skills and may not have the ability to express their emotions effectively. This can lead to feelings of frustration and aggression, which may manifest in biting behaviors. Additionally, teething can be a painful and uncomfortable experience for young children, causing them to bite as a way to relieve the discomfort. Biting can also be a form of exploration for young children as they discover the world around them and learn about cause and effect.

It is important for caregivers to understand why a child may be biting and address the root cause of the behavior rather than simply punishing the child. By addressing the underlying reasons for biting, caregivers can help young children learn more appropriate ways to express their emotions and communicate their needs.

In the case of repeated biting incidents, it may be necessary to send the child home after two or three times in one day (depending on the severity of the situation). Administration will immediately consult with the child's parents to determine if the child will be sent home. It is important to address the underlying reasons for the biting and work with the child and their parents to find solutions. However, sending a child home after any biting instance will ultimately be up to our administration. Please note, sending a child home is not to be used as a punishment, but rather as a way to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in the program. Administration reserves the right to assess each individual biting situation on a case by case basis and determine the next course of action, including suspension from the program.

Snacks and Lunch

We believe that a well-rounded education includes not only academic excellence, but also a focus on overall well-being. By instilling healthy habits at a young age, our students are more likely to maintain these habits throughout their lives. Therefore, we ask that parents avoid packing sugary or unhealthy items such as candy, cake, cupcakes, and soda in their children's lunch and snacks. We cannot serve these items. Instead, we encourage the inclusion of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein-rich options to provide balanced and nutritious options. By working together, we can ensure that our students are nourished and ready to learn each day. Please note that you are required to include an icepack with your child's lunch. We do not have the capability to refrigerate or heat up meals for our students. If you are packing an item that your child would enjoy warm, we suggest packing it in a hot thermos. We also suggest packing a fork or spoon, as well as a container that invites your child to eat independently. Children may not be served the following foods – whole hot dogs, whole grapes, popcorn, pretzels, and chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Grapes MUST be cut, as well as hot dogs, into small, bitesize pieces. Examples of acceptable foods include sandwiches, yogurt, fresh or canned fruit, cooked vegetables cut up, banana slices, whole-grain crackers, rice cakes, mini-pizzas, and cheese. Information relative to allergies must be included on the child's registration forms.

It is IMPERATIVE that you inform us of any food allergies your child might have, such as peanut butter, milk, eggs, etc.

All snacks, water bottles, and lunches must be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Our school is nut-free to protect those with life-threatening allergies. If your child requires medication (such as an EpiPen or inhaler), a signed medical action plan must be on file. We conduct regular cleaning, handwashing, and safety checks throughout the day.

KOSHER POLICY

Keeping kosher is a central tenet of Jewish life. Accordingly, pork and pork products and shellfish may not be brought into the building. Mixing meat/poultry and dairy products within a meal is also not kosher (i.e., a meat/chicken/turkey and cheese sandwich should not be brought to school). In addition, if the Jewish holiday of Passover falls on school days, bread and other products containing yeast (pasta, crackers, cookies, pretzels, etc.) should not be brought in during that time. We will provide matzo for the students. Adequate notice and specific information will be provided as the holiday approaches (Passover usually falls in March or April).

Healthy Habits We Practice Together



Hand Hygiene

Children and staff wash hands frequently, especially before meals and after outdoor play, to keep germs at bay.



Nutritious Snacks

We ask that you pack fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to help children grow strong and healthy.



Safety First

Staff are certified in first aid and CPR, ready to respond to health emergencies with calm, expert care.

Communication Channels: Parent-Teacher Interaction, Progress Reports, and Events

We view families as essential partners in your child's success. Open and consistent communication ensures you always feel connected and informed. Here's how we stay in touch:

- Monthly classroom newsletters with upcoming themes, activities, and reminders
- Weekly lesson plans
- Daily updates through our communication platform, Brightwheel, inform you of meals, naps, and special moments
- Biannual conferences to discuss your child's growth, strengths, and goals
- Family events, volunteer opportunities, and open house days welcomed

You can contact our staff by phone, email, or our parent communication app. We encourage you to share questions, suggestions, or concerns at any time. Our teachers are happy to schedule meetings or calls that fit your family's schedule.

Code of Conduct: Behavioral Expectations for Children and Families

We are committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every child and family. Our code of conduct is grounded in kindness, respect, and positive communication. All community members — children, staff, and parents — are expected to uphold our shared standards.

Temple Shalom Preschool values creating a safe and nurturing environment for all children in our care. As such, we have implemented a policy stating that we reserve the right to dismiss a child at any time for any reason if we determine that our program is not the right fit for the child. This decision will be made after careful consideration and communication with the child's parents or guardians. While we strive to accommodate all children, we recognize that each child is unique and may require a different environment to thrive. This policy allows us to maintain a positive and productive learning environment for all children in our care. Unacceptable behaviors (bullying, aggression, unsafe actions) are addressed promptly using positive guidance and, if needed, a child may be asked to be picked up earlier than their scheduled departure time, on any given day. Ongoing safety or conduct issues may result in suspension or termination per school policy. At Temple Shalom Preschool, we believe that open and honest communication is key in providing the best care for children. If we determine that a child is not the right fit for our program, we will work closely with the child's family to find a suitable alternative that meets the child's individual needs. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that each child receives the best possible care and education, and we understand that this may mean that our program may not be the best fit for every child. We are committed to working with families to find a solution that benefits the child and respects the needs of our preschool community.

At our program, we strive to create a positive and respectful environment for all children, staff, and families. In order to maintain this environment, we have implemented a policy that requires parents and guardians to speak to staff respectfully at all times. We believe that respectful communication is essential in building a strong and trusting relationship between families and our program. Disrespectful behavior towards staff not only undermines their authority, but it also sets a negative example for the children in our care. Therefore, we expect all parents and guardians to model respectful behavior when interacting with our staff.

We understand that parents and guardians may have concerns or disagreements with our program, and we welcome open and honest communication. However, we will not tolerate any rude, aggressive, or disrespectful behavior towards our staff. If a parent or guardian repeatedly displays such behavior, we reserve the right to dismiss them from our program. We believe that a safe and positive environment is crucial for the well-being and development of all children, and we will not compromise on this principle. Additionally, we ask that parents and guardians arrive on time for pick up and notify us in advance of any absences. Excessive lateness or absences can disrupt the routine and activities of our program, and we want to ensure that all children have a consistent and enjoyable experience. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in upholding these behavior expectations for the benefit of all involved in our program.

Developing Self-Regulation and Behavior Management Policy

Our approach to discipline is through conflict resolution processes, prevention, and classroom behavior management procedures. As part of social development and relations with others, children will be guided to:

-Try alternative methods to solve a problem
-Join with others in activities
-Participate in routines
-Try negotiation or other socially acceptable means
-Initiate and sustain interaction
-Express feelings in acceptable ways

When parents and teachers use similar approaches to discipline, it creates yet another connection between home and school for your child. Teachers appreciate your support and are always willing to share with you the strategies that work well with your child at school. If a child has consistent difficulty with a particular behavior such as hitting or biting, we will work collaboratively with parents to resolve the issue. This means that communication is key in discussing the behavior and the resolution. The Director may request the family to have the child evaluated by a developmental specialist in order to create a behavior management plan. Depending on the severity of the situation, this plan may be a prerequisite for continued enrollment.

All children grow and develop at different rates and exhibit different behaviors. Should there be any concern about your child's self-regulation, our policy is to:

-inform you verbally and in writing of the concern
-arrange for the teacher to meet with you; and create and implement strategies in the classroom and at
home. If the concern continues, our policy is to:
schedule a meeting with you, the child's teacher, and the Director to further develop strategies that will support improved behavior, recommend professional support from an outside agency or professional assistance.

-implement strategies with support from an outside agency or
professional assistance
-If positive progress is not achieved, we will schedule a meeting to determine the next best course of action for your child's well-being. It may be determined that it would be in your child's best interest for you to make other arrangements for his/her school setting.

-we reserve the right to act on these steps in any order

School Adjustment and Separation

The first day of school is an exciting day for everyone. Some young children may have hesitancy when separating from their parents. Our experienced preschool teachers will help make this adjustment smooth for both the child and the parent. Look to your child's teacher for their recommendations during the first days of school attendance.

The following are some successful strategies for a smooth transition:

-Accompany the child for an introductory visit on Open House Day

-Discuss school routines with the child

-Assure the child that "mommy/daddy/grandma" will always, always come back

-Remain relaxed and assure the child that the teachers and the environment are safe.

-Look to the teacher for guidance if the child is clinging or showing any signs of anxiety. The teachers know effective techniques for making the child feel safe, stimulating their interest, and facilitating the child with involvement in the class activity.

Procedure for Addressing Concerns and Negotiating Differences

We encourage families to work collaboratively with staff to contribute to decisions about their child's goals and activities. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the teacher, as well as attend regularly scheduled conferences to facilitate their role as primary decision makers for their child. We ask that parents speak with the child's teacher if a concern arises. (A translator will be sought, if needed). Parents and families may also speak with the Director at any time. The Director may negotiate a solution or may encourage families to obtain outside services such as a pediatric evaluation, speech and hearing evaluation, behavioral evaluation, etc.

Clothing

Our program provides a wide variety of activities; please dress your child in appropriate play clothing so he or she will be able to participate fully. This includes wearing shoes that are both comfortable to play in and are appropriate to wear for a mulch-covered playground (i.e., sneakers). Flip-flops and Crocs are not allowed. Clothing should be easy for children to get on and off in order to encourage independence in dressing and toileting. All children should have two complete changes of seasonal clothing (including socks and underwear) labeled with his/her name at school. When dirty or wet clothes are sent home, please send back replacements the next day. Parents of children in diapers should leave a supply with the child's extra clothing. For skirts or dresses, please be sure to have your child wear shorts or leggings underneath.

Diapering

For those children who are in diapers, please make sure there is a sufficient supply of diapers available for your child. Parents must check your child's spare clothing items each week and replenish when necessary. Please refrain from sending your child to school in regular underwear until the training process is complete. "Pull-ups" for school are recommended during this transition. All children entering the three-year-old class are expected to be fully trained. Please note that we are not allowed to apply diaper rash cream without documentation giving permission. Please see an administrator to receive the correct form.

Potty Training

For entry into the three year old group, all children
must be totally and completely potty trained. This means that the child can independently walk to the toilet, re-arrange clothing, eliminate, and self-clean. The child must be capable of eliminating both types in the potty at home and at school (not just urine). Underwear may be worn to school when children demonstrate the following:
-Last longer than an hour between potty visits
-Stay dry in a pull-up at school and dry in underwear at home
-Consistently go to the potty independently for at least one week in school
-Is capable of telling a staff member that they need to go or is going on their own

- Requires a pull-up only during nap time, if necessary

Please do not send your child to school in underwear until you have practiced pottying at home for several weeks. Send your child in a pull-up with loose clothing that is easy to pull up/down. Elastic waistbands are great. Please, no
overalls or Onesies because they are difficult for children to remove independently. Accidents are common and should be expected in the training process. Send several extra sets of clothing, underwear, socks and shoes. We do not use potty chairs or potty rings for hygienic reasons, please do not send to school. The goal of potty training is independent toileting. Wearing clean and dry underwear is the ultimate objective. We do not rinse out soiled underpants, we throw them away.

When accidents occur, teachers will assist children in changing clothes and cleaning up. The only exception to our potty training policy are children with a documented medical condition, and each will be assessed on a case by case basis. Our policy for potty training is that parents play the main role in initiating the process. As
you begin the process at home, please make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher so we may duplicate the process in the classroom.

Tuition & Fees: Payment Schedules, Late Fees, and Financial Assistance

Our tuition structure reflects our commitment to quality care and early education. Tuition is typically billed monthly, with payments due at the start of each period. However, upon enrollment, you do have an option to also pay annually or by semester. We accept online payments through our communication platform, Brightwheel, for your convenience.

If payment is not received on time, a late fee will be applied. Continued late or missing payments may result in loss of enrollment. Please reach out immediately if you experience financial hardship — we strive to support families through payment plans or referral to local assistance programs.

Occasional optional programs (such as enrichment classes) may require a separate fee. Details are always outlined in advance.

We are a VPK (Voluntary Prekindergarten) provider and accept Florida's VPK vouchers. Our staff is available to help you navigate forms or answer questions regarding how to obtain the voucher.

Policies in Plain Language: Non-Refundable Tuition and No Swaps

The preschool's financial and attendance policies are intentionally clear to avoid misunderstandings. The tuition deposit and tuition are non-refundable. No credit is given for family vacations, holidays, illness, or early withdrawals, and days may not be swapped. Refunds are not given for any reason or exception. In plain language, once you register by submitting the completed application and the tuition deposit, you are committing to the program. If your family plans change, or if your child misses time for any reason, tuition obligations remain in place and missed days cannot be exchanged for different days.

Why this matters: early education programs build staffing plans, purchase materials, and commit to fixed costs based on enrollment. Non-refundable tuition helps ensure consistent class ratios and program quality. Swapping days can create inequity in class sizes and disrupt learning routines, so the policy prohibits swaps to maintain fairness across the schedule. Families safeguard their experience by choosing class days that align with typical work, travel, and activity patterns and by reviewing the school calendar for holidays and closures before registering.

If you are unsure which schedule best fits your family, contact the preschool office before submitting your application and deposit. Staff can explain typical class sizes, popular sections, and timing for priority enrollment windows. Remember that enrollment is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority extended to currently enrolled students. Acting promptly during your priority period is the surest way to secure your preferred choice.

For health documentation, aim to submit everything in one complete packet ten business days prior to the first day of school. If updated forms are not received by their expiration date or by the deadline, attendance must pause until the school has compliant, physician-signed records on file. Clear, early communication with both your pediatrician and the preschool office minimizes delays for your child.

Introduction and Purpose

Payment of Fees. In order to maintain the high quality of the school program at the most affordable rate possible for all, the following procedures have been established. This guide clarifies how and when tuition is due, what happens if payments are late, and how special circumstances are handled. It is written to ensure transparency between Temple Shalom Preschool and families while preserving fairness and sustainability for the entire community. Our goal is to make expectations simple, timelines clear, and any potential penalties understandable well in advance so that families can plan confidently throughout the school year. The language below mirrors the official policy while expanding on context, examples, and practical tips for staying current.

Temple Shalom Preschool operates on a school-year basis, which means families make a commitment from August through May. Because each family's budgeting needs are unique, the school offers flexible payment options: pay the full year in a single installment, split it into two larger payments, or choose a ten-installment plan synchronized with the academic calendar. Regardless of which option you choose, the responsibility to submit tuition on time remains with the family. When payments are made punctually, the school can reliably support staffing, classroom materials, enrichment, and continuous improvements that directly benefit your child.

This document also explains the school's late fee structure, the timeframe in which late fees apply, and the serious consequence of nonpayment beyond a specified date—loss of a child's placement in the program. While this is a firm policy, the school recognizes that hardships can occur unexpectedly. If a special problem arises, families are urged to contact the Director immediately to discuss options.

Tuition Options and Due Dates

It is your responsibility to make your tuition payments according to schedule. Children are enrolled on a school-year basis, from August through May. You have the choice to pay the annual tuition in 1, 2 or 10 installments. If you choose to pay in installments, payments are due by the 1st of each month. The simplicity of these options allows you to align tuition with your cash flow: a single payment minimizes ongoing tasks; two payments create a mid-year check-in; and the ten-installment plan smooths expenses across the academic months. No matter the plan, calendars should be marked and reminders set for the 1st to prevent accidental delays. Many families find benefit in automatic bank payments scheduled for the 1st or 2nd of the month to build in a buffer.

If you anticipate any challenge with an upcoming due date, proactively email or call the Director's office. Early communication is often the difference between a manageable adjustment and compounding late fees. Documenting your plan—whether a short, defined extension or a one-time date shift—helps everyone stay aligned. Remember that predictable tuition revenue supports teacher retention, student resources, and a nurturing classroom environment. Your timely participation in the cycle of payments upholds the very quality you chose Temple Shalom Preschool for.

Returned Checks, Withdrawals, and Refunds

There will be a $30.00 service charge for any payment returned for insufficient funds. This charge offsets bank penalties and administrative time required to resolve a failed payment. If a check is returned, please replace the payment promptly with certified funds or an alternative method recommended by the office to prevent further delays or additional late fees triggered by the original missed deadline.

If a student withdraws from Temple Shalom Preschool for any reason, parents must give 30 days written notice. Parents also understand and agree that no portion of the tuition and fees paid shall be refunded. This ensures that staffing, supplies, and classroom commitments—planned and purchased in advance—are not destabilized mid-year. The 30-day notice period provides the school with time to adjust rosters and, when possible, to welcome a waitlisted family into the vacated spot. To initiate withdrawal, submit a dated, signed statement via email or the school's designated form. Keep a copy for your records and confirm receipt with the office to align on the final attendance date and any remaining obligations. You are still held responsible for all remaining tuition.

In extenuating circumstances where the Director has approved a refund, an administrative fee of $50 will be deducted from the refund. Extenuating circumstances may include significant, documented life events. Approval is at the Director's discretion and is intended for truly exceptional cases. If you believe your situation qualifies, provide clear documentation and a concise written request. If a partial refund is granted, expect the $50 administrative fee to be applied before disbursement to cover processing time and transaction costs. The combination of a consistent no-refund policy and a narrow, compassionate exception helps the school remain both stable and humane.

Late Fees and Maintaining Good Standing

All tuition payments not made by the 1st of the month will be subject to a $50.00 late payment fee each business day for up to an additional 10 days. If a special problem or hardship exists, immediately contact the Director. By failing to pay the overdue tuition and subsequent late fees by the 15th of any month, you risk relinquishing your child's placement in the program. The escalating nature of late fees reflects the operational impact of delayed tuition. Each day beyond the 1st requires administrative follow-up, cash flow adjustments, and, in some cases, delayed purchases for classrooms. As a result, the fee is structured per business day up to a defined cap period of 10 days, giving families a clear window to resolve issues quickly.

What does "good standing" mean in practice? Families in good standing have met their payment obligations or have an approved plan in writing from the Director that addresses a temporary hardship. If you find yourself approaching the 1st without funds available, reach out immediately—ideally before the due date. The Director can explore short-term arrangements within policy limits. However, if no arrangement is made and the balance remains unpaid (including accumulated late fees) by the 15th, the policy states that the child's placement may be relinquished to ensure fairness to families on waitlists and to stabilize classroom ratios.

Emergency Procedures: Safety Drills, Weather Policies, and Contact Information

Ensuring the safety of our children and staff is a team effort. We follow strict protocols for emergencies and review them regularly with staff, families, and children.

We conduct regular fire, severe weather, and lockdown drills so everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Safety procedures — including designated exits, shelter areas, and first aid kits — are posted and practiced regularly.

Our center follows local and state guidelines for weather closures. You will receive notification via our parent app, email, and local media sources if the school must close due to hurricanes, floods, or other emergencies. Please ensure your contact information is current at all times.

In case of emergency, administrative contacts are always available, and certified staff remain on site until all children are safely released to an authorized adult. A list of emergency phone numbers and school contacts is provided upon enrollment and posted throughout our campus.

Your Administrative Team

Nicole Bouvier, Preschool Director

nbouvier@naplestemple.org

Eliza Cardoze, Assistant Director

assistantdirector@naplestemple.org

Laura DeBlock, Senior Administrative Assistant

Ldeblock@naplestemple.org

Shelley Noble, Director of Education

snoble@naplestemple.org

Frequently Asked Questions & Parent Resources

We aim to support families with clear information and helpful resources. Below are answers to our most common questions:

- What is your illness policy? Children should stay home if sick and can return when symptom-free for 24 hours.
- Do you offer part-time or flexible schedules? Yes, we have several options. Please ask for details.
- What should my child bring each day? A labeled backpack, nutritious lunch, 1-2 snacks (depending on program attending), water bottle, and a complete change of clothes. Infants and toddlers also need diapers, wipes, and comfort items as needed. Children staying for the nap/rest period are provided with a cot size sheet and blanket.
- Do you celebrate birthdays? We recognize every child's special day with a treat (allergy and health-friendly). Please coordinate with your teacher.
- How do I get involved? Join our POTS parent group or volunteer for events, enrichment activities, or classroom projects.

For further resources, see our family events calendar, or ask our office for local support services and early childhood educational guides.


Shabbat in
Our Preschool

Welcoming Shabbat Each Friday

Each Friday, our preschoolers welcome Shabbat, a special time in Jewish tradition that celebrates rest, gratitude, and being together with family and community. Shabbat is a joyful and meaningful part of our weekly rhythm in the classroom.

We gather together to sing songs, say simple blessings, and talk about what makes Shabbat special. This helps children build a sense of connection to Jewish traditions while also practicing community, kindness, and reflection. Teachers model inclusive language and encourage each child to share something they are grateful for—family dinners, time outside, or reading a favorite story. By weaving in these reflective practices, children begin to understand that Shabbat is both about Jewish ritual and about universal values like rest, gratitude, and togetherness. The weekly rhythm creates anticipation, and the repetition of songs and blessings fosters confidence and belonging.

One of the highlights of our Friday celebration is making challah. The children help prepare the dough and practice braiding their own small challot. This hands-on experience encourages creativity, fine motor development, and pride in participating in a meaningful tradition. The aroma of fresh challah baking adds to the excitement as we prepare to welcome Shabbat together. As they knead and braid, children practice counting, sequencing, and cooperation—waiting for a turn, sharing tools, and complimenting their peers' braids. We invite parents and guardians to volunteer for this special experience. Our administrative team can guide you on how to sign up to be a part of our challah making tradition!

