



YESHIVA TORAT EMET

Parent Handbook

5780-5781/2020-2021

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MISSION STATEMENT

Yeshiva Torat Emet is dedicated to instilling Torah values and positive character traits within its students. We are committed to helping each child reach his/her potential, and we encourage close cooperation between home and school.

Yeshiva Torat Emet prides itself on excellence in both Judaic and secular instruction. The students gain a love of Torah, as well as an excitement and interest in all Judaic aspects of life. In addition, we focus on Sephardic tradition, with an emphasis on Ivrit.

Please refer to the “Administrative Contact Guide” on page 13 to identify the best administrator to contact.

ADMINISTRATION

Rabbi Yerachmiel Garfield Ed.D., Head of School

Mrs. Esti Littman, Early Childhood Director

Rabbi Chaim Helprin, Assistant Principal, Limudei Kodesh/Upper School

Mrs. Melissa Truelove, Assistant Principal, General Studies/Elementary School

Mrs. Devorah Ouzzan, Girls Limudei Kodesh Coordinator/Upper School

Rabbi Dovid Gewirtz, School Administrator

Office Manager: Ms. Tish Neff

Director of Development: Mrs. Joanna Pines

Student Support Coordinator: Mrs. Faige Grossman

Ms. Noa Gadot: Ivrit Coordinator

Business Office: Mrs. Sarah Zelmanowitz

Receptionist: Mrs. Inna Somorov

OPERATIONAL SCHEDULE

School is open from 8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. during regular school days (5th-8th grade boys begin with minyan at 8:00 A.M.). There is limited early drop off at 8:00 A.M. Please contact Mrs. Littman at elittman@ytehouston.org if you need this service. Please call the front office or email carpool@ytehouston.org for carpool updates.

Carpool Information

Carpool lane will be open during these times- Please make sure to pick up your child on time:

Morning: 8:15 – 8:30 A.M.

Mid-day: 2:00 – 2:15 P.M.

Afternoon: 4:00 – 4:15 P.M.

Please call school office to check for availability of Early Childhood aftercare for occasional use, at a cost of \$7 per hour per child.

A. Traffic Plan

- The traffic plan is based on direction we received from a traffic study required by the City of Houston.
- There is one carpool line that groups along the right side of Braesridge Drive (from Ludington) and makes a left turn into parking lot.

- When making the left into our parking lot please wait for the lane to be clear to avoid blocking cars coming or going to Joe V's.
- If you are coming from W. Belfort either come into area via Ludington Drive entrance or make a u turn where safe and get on carpool line located on Braesridge Drive.
- Please do not enter carpool line from inside Joe V's parking lot or other directions.

- B. For the safety of all children please limit cell phone use during carpool.
- C. Parents are responsible to buckle all children in their car.
- D. Children should only enter and exit the cars from the side closest to the building.
- E. Children are not permitted to cross parking lot without adult supervision.
- F. No unattended vehicles should be parked in the carpool lane.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

- A. To enroll in Yeshiva Torat Emet parents must complete and submit the enrollment packet online, via their Renweb Parent account found at <https://www.ytehouston.org/admissions>
- B. Tuition Contract, FACTS agreement, and registration fees must be finalized before the first day of school.
- C. As per community agreement, a child, transferring from another community school to which monies are owed, will not be admitted.
- D. Yeshiva Torat Emet admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Yeshiva Torat Emet does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

DROP OFF AND RELEASE OF CHILDREN

- A. Children in the Early Childhood department must be walked to their classrooms by an adult or sibling in first grade or older. Parents are welcome to walk their children to the room at any time. During carpool time (8:15-8:30), the Early Childhood staff will escort the children to their rooms as needed or requested by parents. After carpool has closed and staff is no longer available to bring children to their classrooms, the adult that brings the child to school should park and walk him/her to the classroom.
- B. Children will only be released to their parents or other adults when authorized by parents via Dismissal Form and emergency contacts listed on the submitted Registration Form. When alternate arrangements are made, the office must be notified by the parent by filling out the form or emailing carpool@ytehouston.org. In case of emergency student will be released with emergency contact person.
- C. If you are carpooling or walking with someone on a regular basis, please fill out a Dismissal Form at the school office or online.
- D. Early Childhood student arrival and departure is recorded daily by caregivers.
- E. All children picked up early from school need to be signed out by an accompanying adult at the front desk.
- F. If any other change regarding pick-up occurs, a parent or guardian should notify the school office by calling the front office or sending an email to carpool@ytehouston.org.

G. Yeshiva Torat Emet is committed to protecting all students. If the student does not live with both natural parents, evidence of custody must be presented. A copy of the custody decree with the judge's signature and court seal will be maintained in the appropriate Principal's office and/or the child's permanent folder. The guidelines of the custody decree, with respect to school issues, will be strictly enforced. Without this document, the child will be released to either parent.

DISCIPLINE

We strive for discipline or guidance to be positive, productive, and immediate, when behavior is inappropriate. When an undesirable behavior is involved, positive redirection will be used, and children will be redirected to an activity that is acceptable. Children who have conflicts or problems with others will be encouraged to verbalize their anger and concerns. The role of the teacher is to be a facilitator of positive problem solving. Our teachers guide rather than punish.

Children whose behavior endangers others will be supervised away from other children. The child will process the problem with a teacher or administrator. Natural or logical consequences may also be used to address inappropriate behaviors. Staff uses "time out" only when a child is emotionally out of control and needs a private time to regain composure. Verbal processing is our preferred technique.

Children in our program will never receive physical punishment. YTE will not allow any child to be humiliated, shamed, frightened, or subjected to verbal or physical abuse by staff or by parents on the premises or during field trips.

A Discipline Report may be filed in a situation in which the student is causing harm to a teacher or another student. In such instances, the student may be required to leave school for the remainder of the day. Parents may be called to come speak with the administration. Students may be involuntarily withdrawn from school for harmful or unacceptable behavior.

BULLYING

1. Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety – either psychologically or physically – or their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.
2. Bullying behavior is intentional, repeated, and creates an imbalance of power.
3. Bullying can include any verbal abuse such as slurs, name-calling, and derogatory statements to another person because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance or sexual orientation.
4. Bullying can be any act or speech that subjects people to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threat of physical abuse, social or other isolation, shame or disgrace.
5. Bullying is not acceptable behavior at Yeshiva Torat Emet. Once teachers and administrators ascertain that a student has bullied another student, administrators will take immediate action to address the situation.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual harassment is prohibited at Yeshiva Torat Emet. Anyone who believes they have been sexually

harassed is encouraged to promptly report such incidents to an administrator. All allegations and complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated and addressed with the involvement of law enforcement if indicated.

Yeshiva Torat Emet prohibits harassment and/or discrimination in general, including harassment and/or discrimination motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or age.

Any employee who violates these policies is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. Employees will receive regular training to prevent sexual harassment and harassment and discrimination motivated by other prohibited grounds.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In an effort to protect the well-being and safety of children, the State of Texas requires anyone who suspects child abuse and neglect to report it to the proper authorities. Members of the school staff have been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. All suspected indicators will be documented and reported. The school is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect. The phone number to the child abuse hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

If an employee is accused of abuse or neglect of a student, YTE follows procedures required by Minimum Standard Rules, set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf. This process is set in motion with a phone call from an administrator who makes a self-report to TDFPS.

Yeshiva Torat Emet follows the behavioral standards developed by Torah Umesorah aimed at preventing sexual abuse as written in their Personnel Handbook.

TORAH UMESORAH BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS

While most interactions between staff and children fall well within the range of normal healthy relationships, certain behaviors are incompatible with the goals and standards of a yeshiva and Jewish upbringing and, therefore, are always prohibited.

- Teachers/staff may not be alone with child/children in a locked room or in any area that cannot be seen or observed by other faculty members or adults.
- Teachers/staff must avoid contact with students which is of a sexually motivated or physically abusive nature, such as fondling, inappropriate touching or physical assault.
- Teachers/staff may never forbid students from sharing any conversations or information with parents or administration, nor instruct students to “keep secrets” from their parents.
- Teachers/staff must refrain from any sexually immodest behavior or speech, especially from exhibiting sexual interest in students and from inappropriate jokes or innuendos.

Any explicit or indirect invitation to engage in inappropriate or suggestive sexual activities, which may or may not include a promise to reward for complying or a threat of reprisal for not complying constitute a violation of school policy and should be immediately reported to the principal.

When there is reason to believe such a violation has occurred, the reporting of fondling, touching or any form of lewdness is not considered mesirah. Staff who observes or learns of such behavior should report this to his or her principal or head of the yeshiva/school. The principal should adhere to all

applicable policies and laws as a mandated reporter in their city or state. The principal, if s/he deems it necessary, should consult a Moreh Hora'ah or attorney.

COMMUNICATION

- A. Early Childhood newsletters will be sent home weekly.
- B. Communications with parents will be via email. Please check your email on a regular basis, and if you are not receiving our correspondence, please let us know.
- C. In case of an accident in school or an emergency, parents will be notified immediately, and the Incident/Illness Form will be completed and placed in the child's file.
- D. Unexpected school closings will be communicated via email. Please note that we do not necessarily follow HISD.

ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is noticeably sick or has any of the following symptoms:

- Possible contagious illness
- Fever of at least 100.4 F., vomiting, or diarrhea
- Not able to function normally or exhibits unusual behavior which might indicate an illness
- Excessive cough, cold or runny nose (yellow or green mucous)

If a child becomes ill at school, we will notify the parent/guardian immediately. The child who is ill will be isolated from the rest of the group and the child's parent must come to pick him/her up without delay.

The school reserves the right to have the final say in determining when a child should be sent home due to illness. We ask you to partner with us to keep our students well and healthy. If your child has a contagious disease, please inform the school. Children need to be symptom free (of diarrhea, fever, vomiting), specifically, free of fever- *without the use of fever reducing medications*, for twenty- four hours before returning to school.

MEDICATION

Please do not send medicine to school unless absolutely necessary. It is preferred that children take medicine before and after school hours.

Parents must complete the Medication Form any time they send medicine to be taken at school, available at <http://www.ytehouston.org/forms-and-documents>. Any medicine to be administered at school should be sent in the original container. (You can ask the pharmacy for an extra container.)

The Medication Log will be completed by office employee every time medication is given to Early Childhood student.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In case of an illness or emergency the following procedure will be followed:

- 1 The staff will attempt to call one or both parents.
- 2 If parents cannot be reached, the staff will attempt to call the designated Emergency Contact persons in the child's file.
- 3 When a child needs immediate medical attention, a staff member will determine whether to call the child's doctor or 9-1-1.

All expenses incurred are the responsibility of the parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND OTHER HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

- A. All students must be vaccinated for the MMR unless they supply a medical exemption that is based on a specific individual's medical history and granted by a physician who is wholly supportive of the vaccine program. We reserve the right to evaluate any medical exemption and have final authority to decide if it will be accepted.
- B. All other vaccinations must be up to date unless a parent provides a medical note or notarized affidavit.
- C. A Health Statement from a physician, stating that the child had a Physical Exam within the last 12 months, must be on file for each Early Childhood students at Yeshiva Torat Emet.
- D. TB testing is recommended for children.
- E. Children four and over are required to have hearing and vision screenings. Please request that your pediatrician do these screenings during the child's annual exam.

MEALS AND FOOD SERVICE

- A. Currently, our school is a peanut-free school. Some classrooms may be designated as free of all nuts, as well; parents of students in specified classes will be notified about the nut-free environment requirements before the start of the school year.
- B. Please make sure that your children have breakfast before they come to school.
- C. Please send kosher dairy or parve snacks, lunches, and drinks for your child. Make sure to include any eating utensils and napkins as necessary. Parents are responsible for the nutritional value of the food provided for their children and for meeting their children's daily food needs.
- D. Hot water will not be provided to students so please do not send soups that require hot water.
- E. Students are discouraged from sharing food in school.
- F. Any food supplied for classroom distribution must be approved by an administrator, Cholon Yisrael (including keilim/equipment) or parve, and peanut free.
- G. If your Early Childhood age child is staying from 2:15-4:00 p.m. please send additional snack for that time.
- H. No metal knives may be sent to school.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

- A. Birthday parties in school are for Early Childhood classes only.
- B. Parties should be arranged by contacting teachers.
- C. All food must be purchased from an approved kosher facility with acceptable kosher certification.
- D. Please check with your child's teacher to see if any of the children have food allergies – if so, please do not bring anything that cannot be eaten by all of the children.

- E. All cakes must be kosher/Parve (some stores require pre-ordering for Parve.)
- F. No balloons or goody bags.
- G. All items should be checked for appropriate kosher supervision by a school administrator prior to use in the classroom.
- H. If you are hosting a party outside of school, we ask that all classmates be invited.
- I. We discourage parents from taking elementary or upper school children from class to attend a sibling's party.

LICE PROCEDURES

A. Lice checking

1. YTE will attempt to provide school-wide checks at the beginning and at intervals throughout the year.
2. The school will carefully monitor those who are absent during the scheduled checks, as well as children who are identified as having lice or nits. These students will be required to be checked by either a certified company or one of our trained mothers, prior to entering school.

B. Confirmed Lice and Nits

1. Children found to have lice will be sent home and will not be allowed to return until they are checked by either a certified company or one of our trained mothers.
2. Children who are found with a small number of nits will not be sent home. They are required to be checked by either a certified company or one of our trained mothers, prior to returning to school.
3. Children found to have either lice or nits must be rechecked 5 to 7 days after the initial checking by either a certified company or one of our trained mothers.

C. Communication

1. If a student is found to have lice, the parents of that student's class will be notified.

DRESS CODE

At Yeshiva Torat Emet, we are committed to providing your children with the highest quality education, both in Limudei Kodesh and General Studies. One of the main components of academic success is promoting the positive self-image and dedicated work ethic of each and every student. As such, the YTE dress code has been updated for **grades 1-8** to further foster a strong sense of self-esteem and to encourage a serious, respectful attitude toward school and academic achievement.

BOYS (1st grade and higher):

Halachic Requirements

All boys three and older should wear a kippah and tzitzit throughout the day. During recess or gym, clips or bobby pins should be worn to prevent the kippah from falling off.

Shirts:

A long or short sleeved polo, or oxford style button-down dress shirt, in solid white, light blue, royal blue, or light grey (up to a 2" logo is allowed) is always required to be worn.

Pants:

Any solid navy, grey, or black, flat front or pleated chino style pants are always permitted and required to be worn. No sports pants, cargo pockets, or denim. Shorts may be worn through 4th grade.

Sweaters, Sweatshirts, and Cardigans:

Any solid colored garment to keep the child warm is permitted. Up to a 2" logo is allowed, no writing or designs.

Our school sweatshirt in heather grey for boys is sold by Lands' End. Our preferred school number: 900185166 and can be purchased at this link:

<https://www.landsend.com/pp/SchoolSearch.html?action=landing&selectedSchoolNum=900185166>

Shoes:

Sneakers, tennis shoes, loafers, or similar closed-toe, flat shoes may be worn. Shoes with open backs and/or toes are not permitted. No Crocs, Heelys, or cleats are allowed.

Socks:

Socks must be worn and may not contain any characters, pictures, or animations.

Caps:

Caps are not permitted.

GIRLS (1st grade and higher):**Shirts:**

A three-quarter length or long-sleeved polo or oxford button down style, in solid white, light blue, royal blue, or light pink (up to a 2" logo is allowed) is required to be worn at all times.

Shirts can be purchased anywhere such shirts are sold, such as Walmart, Old Navy, and Lands' End.

Skirts/ Jumper:

Specific jumpers or skirts that are grey, pleated and cover the knees, may only be purchased from one of the following three vendors:

1. Marks and Spencer London

us-girls-permanent-pleat-traditional-skirt-with-stormwear-in-longer-lengths. This skirt is no longer available for sale but still allowed to be worn.

2. Engelic

Girls School Uniform Pleated Two Strap Jumper Poly 5-10 \$45

<http://www.engelicuniforms.com/girls-school-uniform-pleated-two-strap-jumper-poly-5-10/>

Girls School Uniform Pleated Skirt English Poly 5-18 \$42

<http://www.engelicuniforms.com/girls-school-uniform-pleated-skirt-english-poly-5-18/>

3. Lands' End

School Uniform Girls Solid Pleated Skirt Below the Knee

http://www.landsend.com/products/school-uniform-solid-pleated-skirt-below-the-knee/id_253561?sku_0=:BLA

School Uniform Girls Solid Box Pleat Skirt Below the Knee

http://www.landsend.com/products/school-uniform-solid-box-pleat-skirt-below-the-knee/id_253569?sku_0=:CLN

Sweaters, Sweatshirts, and Cardigans:

Any solid colored garment to keep the child warm is permitted. Up to a 2" logo is allowed, no writing or designs.

Our school sweatshirt in maroon for girls is sold by Lands' End. Our preferred school number: 900185166 and can be purchased at this link:

<https://www.landsend.com/pp/SchoolSearch.html?action=landing&selectedSchoolNum=900185166>

Socks

Socks must be solid color and cover ankles (may not contain any characters, pictures, or animations). Solid colored leggings that meet the socks are permitted.

Shoes:

Sneakers, tennis shoes, loafers, Mary Janes, or similar flat shoes may be worn.

Open back and/or toes shoes and high heels are not permitted. No Crocs, Heelys, or cleats are allowed.

Accessories:

Hats, caps, nail polish, or makeup are not permitted.

LOST AND FOUND

Items remaining in the lost and found for thirty days will be considered hefker (ownerless).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic entertainment and communication devices are not allowed at school. Cell phone use for elementary school children is a complicated issue which requires careful consideration. If parents feel that their Upper School child needs to have a phone, for travel to and from school, then written permission from a parent (either through an email or a signed note) is needed. At school, the phone will need to be turned off and deposited in the designated administrator's office to be retrieved after school hours. Students will be told that if a phone is found or seen in school outside of the designated place, it will be taken away and returned when a parent comes to pick it up. If it is found/seen a second time, the phone will be taken away for a month. If found/seen a third time, the student will no longer be allowed to bring a phone to school.

Please understand that YTE is not responsible for anything that happens to a phone while in school, even when it is in the administrator's office. When a parent gives permission, they do so while understanding the above procedures and the risks involved.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Students who have a documented need for an assistive technology device may bring one to school and are expected to follow school guidelines. Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the suspension of the ability to bring the device to school.

1. The administration, teachers, and students take no responsibility, under any circumstances for the device (in case it is stolen, broken, lost etc...).
2. The device will remain in school or be brought in each day and placed in a specified location. It will only be used by the student when instructed by the teacher. Other than with explicit teacher permission, the student may not use the computer.

3. If internet access is required, we have found that a Chromebook works best to meet our requirements and support limiting access. Please consult with school prior to purchasing laptop to ensure it will work.
4. There will be no nonacademic usage of computer allowed in school.
5. All passwords shared between school and home must be kept confidentially between school and parents and not shared with student.
6. The device must be brought to the administration to confirm technological expectations are met prior to the device being utilized in school.
7. A document with this information must be signed by student and parent.

MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Yeshiva Torat Emet does not provide transportation.
- B. Yeshiva Torat Emet does not provide water activities.
- C. Field Trips may be scheduled during the course of the school year, and a specific permission slip with trip details will be sent home prior to the trip. There may be a fee associated with individual trips.
- D. Animals should not be brought into Yeshiva Torat Emet.
- E. Students may not sell things in school unless approved by administration.
- F. No students, parents or visitors will be allowed to bring weapons, including knives and firearms onto the campus.
- G. Textbooks and materials that are distributed to students are expected to be treated well and returned. Any materials that are lost will be the responsibility of the child and parents to replace.
- H. All visitors are required to sign in.
- I. Students may not bring gum, sunflower seeds or slime (and slime alternative) onto school campus.
- J. All mothers have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care at Yeshiva Torat Emet. A comfortable, private place can be provided at any time, on request, to accommodate this.
- K. Parents may visit the Early Childhood Department at any time during our hours of operation to observe their child, our operation, and activities. Please check in at the front desk when visiting.
- L. In case of emergency in our facility, our students will be evacuated across the street to: Congregation Beth Rambam, 11333 Braesridge Dr., Houston, Texas 77071
- M. The Licensing Inspection Report will be available in the Director's office. Details of the last Licensing Inspection can be found at www.txchildcaresearch.org. DFPS's Minimum standards can be found at https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf for more information, please see <https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>.

- N. Every parent has a right to file a complaint to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. P.O. Box 16017, Houston, TX 77222-9989. The number for our local licensing office is 713-940-3009. The child abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.
- O. Yeshiva Torat Emet is in a gang-free zone. Criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of our school is subject to harsher penalty.
- P. Yeshiva Torat Emet does not require employees to receive specific vaccinations. Employees are encouraged to discuss with their personal physicians what vaccinations would be appropriate for them as adults working in a childcare or school setting.

These Operational Policies will hold for the 2020-2021 school year.
If any changes will be made, parents will be notified in writing.



ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT GUIDE

In most cases, concerns should first be addressed with your child's teacher(s). If you need further assistance, the list below can guide you in knowing who to contact. Faculty can be reached by calling our front office at 713-721-3900 or via email address found at <https://www.ytehouston.org/faculty>

	Early Childhood	1 st -4 th Grades	5 th -8 th Grades
Student Life Social challenges Special programs Aftercare enrollment	Mrs. Littman	Mrs. Truelove	Rabbi Helprin - Boys Mrs. Ouzzan - Girls
Academics Teacher interactions Instructional content Instructional materials Instructional evaluations Curriculum based special programs Student classroom performance	Mrs. Littman	<i>Limudei Kodesh</i> Rabbi Helprin - Boys Mrs. Ouzzan - Girls <i>General Studies</i> Mrs. Truelove <i>Ivrit</i> Ms. Noa Gadot	<i>Limudei Kodesh</i> Rabbi Helprin - Boys Mrs. Ouzzan - Girls <i>General Studies</i> Mrs. Truelove <i>Ivrit</i> Ms. Noa Gadot
Student Support Additional support and evaluations	Mrs. Littman	Mrs. Grossman	Mrs. Grossman
School Business Payments Donations Payroll Questions	Mrs. Zelmanowitz	Mrs. Zelmanowitz	Mrs. Zelmanowitz
School Front Office Carpool change or early dismissal Information about events and programs Contact info for teachers Aftercare "drop ins"	Mrs. Somorov	Mrs. Somorov	Mrs. Somorov
School Back Office Registration Building Maintenance Report Cards Teacher Conferences Scheduling Supplies	Ms. Neff	Ms. Neff	Ms. Neff
PTA Pizza lunch Volunteer opportunities	TBA	TBA	TBA
School Wide School Policy Questions Unresolved concerns	Rabbi Garfield	Rabbi Garfield	Rabbi Garfield