



PARENT HANDBOOK



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Shorashim Academy! We thank you for trusting us to educate your children and for joining us for our inaugural year. We are confident that with Hashem's help Shorashim Academy will have a positive impact on hundreds of Jewish children and families throughout South Florida.

This Parent Handbook is a practical guide to Shorashim Academy's policies, procedures, and available resources. A strong school-parent partnership is crucial in maximizing each child's potential. We kindly request that you read it carefully to support our efforts in ensuring a safe and positive learning experience for your child/children.

There is another school sharing our school space, and every effort has been made to cooperatively share the building and outdoor area. We kindly ask that you please be considerate and refrain from disturbing the learning environment of both schools.

We look forward to seeing you all on Meet The Teacher Night, Thursday, August 17th at 6:00-7:30 PM. Please make every effort to attend.

Clear communication with parents is of utmost importance for student success. We strongly believe in parents as partners in the academic, social/emotional, and religious education of their children. It is through this collaborative effort that our students will internalize what they learn at Shorashim Academy and become the future leaders that they are destined to become.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gur Berman,
Head of School



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MISSION STATEMENT

MISSION, VISION, VALUE PROPOSITION

Vision - An inspired community of learners guided by Judaism and Zionism

Mission - Shorashim Academy is a welcoming Zionist Orthodox Jewish day school dedicated to developing the whole student to reach their academic, social, emotional, and spiritual potential.

Value Proposition - Shorashim Academy is geared to public school students and provides an affordable "A" rated general studies education and an excellent Judaic and Israel education.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of connection to Jewish, Israeli, and Zionist roots are:

- The modern state of Israel is the homeland of all Jews. It was promised by G-d in the Torah to the Jewish people, and the Jewish people have earned it over the last 125 years through their incredible sacrifice, dedication, and hard work.
- Aliyah or living in Israel is an important religious and national value for any Jewish person.
- Learning Hebrew is critical for two reasons: First, our most important Jewish texts are in Hebrew. Knowledge of Hebrew is a prerequisite to learning those texts in their original forms. Second, Hebrew is the national language of the modern state of Israel. Fluency in reading and writing Hebrew greatly facilitates visiting and living in the State of Israel. It also provides a baseline language of communication for Jews from different nations , promoting *achdut* (unity) regardless of their addresses internationally.

The principles of our rigorous academic program are:

- In school, the teacher is the most important factor in a child's education. A great teacher motivates a child to reach his highest potential and arranges learning experiences that result in lasting and impactful learning.
- Out of school, parents are the most important factor in a child's education. They ensure that a child arrives at school on time, completes homework in a timely manner, and values reaching his highest academic, social, and emotional potential.
- Cutting edge curricula are necessary to provide interesting and impactful material for teachers and their students. When the above individuals and materials are working together, there is no limit to what a child can accomplish.

The principles of our social and emotional curriculum are:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn and practice specific social skills. Our goal is for our students to be safe, respectful, and responsible everywhere and at all times
- Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education.

These principles are taken from the Responsive Classroom framework: to learn more <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Parents are kept aware of their child's development in a number of ways:

- Meet the Teacher Night (before the school year begins) - allows parents to meet their child's teacher and become acquainted with the teacher's plans for the year.
- Report cards—issued four times a year at the end of each quarterly marking period.
- Parent–teacher conferences—held twice a year (in November and February).

Parents wishing to meet with their child's teacher at other times during the school year are urged to email the teacher to schedule an appointment. Members of the administration are always available to discuss any concerns after parents have met with the teacher. If the administration feels there is a need to meet parents concerning a student's progress, parents will be contacted.



ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (also see “Carpool”)

The first day of school is Monday, August 21, 2023. Please note, the first day is a regular school day.

Morning carpool runs from 8:15-8:30.

Dismissal Monday–Thursday is at 3:30-3:45 p.m. Friday dismissal is at 3:00-3:15 p.m.

ATTENDANCE/LATENESS/ABSENCE

Morning Attendance:

Attendance is taken at 8:30. Please make sure your child arrives at school on time. Arrange your carpool to arrive between 8:20 - 8:25. If your child is escorting a younger sibling, factor that extra time into your morning schedule.

Family Vacations:

Regular attendance in school is a prerequisite for academic success – especially in our dual program, where every moment counts. Academic achievement is directly correlated to the amount of active learning a child experiences. Even the best teachers can not have a positive impact on students if the students are not in school. Family vacations should be scheduled during school breaks!

Make-Up Work:

Following an absence, a reasonable amount of time will be given for class work and homework assignments to be completed.

Parental Notes:

When a child returns to school from an absence or lateness, he/she must bring a note for the teachers, signed by a parent, explaining the absence or lateness.

Early Dismissal:

Students may not be excused from school early, before regular dismissal time, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Parents are urged to cooperate by arranging medical, dental and other appointments after school hours. If a student must leave school early, parents must sign the student out at the front desk.

BUS/CARPOOL

Students should be dropped off in the back of Soref Hall in the morning. Students will be picked up in front of the Brodzki building in the afternoon. When arriving for carpool, all vehicles are to



line up behind the last car in line. Follow instructions of school personnel. Parents should ensure that their children exit the vehicle quickly to make room for others in the carpool line.

You are responsible for arranging alternate rides for your children (and the children in your carpool) in the event you are unable to pick up your carpool. The school office is unable to make these arrangements for you.

All carpools must arrive at the school for the afternoon pick-up by 3:45 Monday-Thursday, and by 3:15 on Fridays. There is no adult assigned to supervise the children after that time, nor can Shorashim Academy take responsibility for the children's safety or security after that time. Please be mindful that arriving late unfairly inconveniences school staff and distresses your child, who may feel anxious when he or she is the last child remaining in school. Please make picking up your child on time a priority.

CELLPHONES

Student Phone Policy:

We do not believe elementary aged students should own a phone. If your child does own a phone, we strongly encourage you to leave it at home. If you insist that your child bring a phone to school, it must be turned off and in your child's backpack at all times. If this rule is not followed, the phone will be confiscated and you will need to pick it up from the office.

Carpool:

For the safety of our students and faculty, do not use your cell phone during carpool.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS / PHONE NUMBER / E-MAIL ADDRESS

Parents must properly complete and immediately update contact and emergency information on our parent portal so that, if necessary, we can easily and immediately contact parents. The importance of the school being able to contact you in case of emergency cannot be overemphasized. Critical information during emergencies is shared with parents by text message, whatsapp and/or email.

School-wide emergency situations and instructions will be communicated via text, whatsapp, and/or email.

CLASS TRIPS

Class trips and outings are scheduled periodically throughout the school year. Parents will be notified in advance of the date, time, destination and mode of transportation. Prior to each trip, parents will be asked to sign a permission slip for their child to participate. Parent volunteers are usually needed. Try to make yourself available for at least one trip a year!



DIRECTORY

All Shorashim Academy personnel can be reached via email at their first initial, last name @shorashimacademy. For example, Dr. Berman can be reached at gberman@shorashimacademy.org

If you have any questions in the following areas:

School Wide Academic, Policy, or Procedure Questions- Dr. Gur Berman

Financial Questions or Concerns-Rabbi Isaac Melnick

Other Administrative Questions-Mrs. Miriam Melnick

Question about school wide positive behavior support or discipline questions- Mrs. Ellen Koppel

Questions about your child's progress-Your child's teacher

DISCIPLINE (see Appendix A for more detailed information)

Our Approach:

In the class and school-wide, we implement the Responsive Classroom approach to discipline. In a respectful, yet forthright manner, rules of conduct are clearly articulated and fairly and consistently implemented.

The school discipline policy stresses the positive, but logical consequences are employed when necessary. Extreme misbehavior may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension, if absolutely necessary, to maintain a safe and secure learning environment. Parent involvement and support are vital in encouraging our students to live up to the high standards of behavior set for our students.

School Counselor:

Mrs. Ellen Koppel, our school counselor with a master's degree in counseling, is dedicated to helping children with social, emotional, and behavioral issues. Students may be referred to the school counselor by teachers or members of the administration. As appropriate, parents will be brought into the process. Parents may also initiate a request for the school counselor's help.

Respect for School Property:

Part of discipline is helping keep the buildings and grounds in good condition. This includes no littering in the rooms, walkways, playgrounds, school grounds, and surrounding areas. There is no eating allowed in the walkways and corridors. Students with a healthy self-respect take pride in a clean and orderly environment and actively assist in maintaining a clean classroom and school.

DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS

All students must be dressed in clothing that conforms to school policy in order to be allowed into class.

Girls Uniform:

Tops - Polo shirt with school logo (navy or light blue) /

Bottoms - Uniform style, knee-length skirt (khaki or navy)

Boys Uniform:

Tops - Polo shirt with school logo (navy or light blue)

Bottoms - Uniform style pants or shorts (khaki or navy)

Shoes/Socks:

Closed-toe/closed back shoes or sneakers (no shoes with wheels)

Must wear socks

Outerwear:

Navy sweater or sweatshirt (no pattern or writing)

Our Uniform Store:

All Uniform Wear (4379 W Sunrise Blvd #10 - J, Plantation 33313); Alluniformwear.com

Ordering Instructions:

Shirts - Be sure to request the Shorashim Logo. This process takes only 15-20 minutes, if you go before July 15.

Skirts - We highly recommend buying skirts at All Uniform Wear (only available in store, not on website). Uniform knee-length skirts are hard to find elsewhere.

Shorts/Pants- Can be ordered at All Uniform Wear. If ordering elsewhere, make sure to purchase uniform style shorts/pants.

ELECTRONIC HAND-HELD TOYS

These devices may not be used at school, nor at arrival or dismissal.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of each family to keep current with the financial obligation agreed upon with the school. Admission to class is contingent upon finalizing tuition arrangements and timely payment of fees and tuition. Any family with outstanding obligations during or at the end of the school year, including, but not limited to: tuition, fees, and lost book fees, may not receive report cards or achievement test scores. Timely payment of obligations helps ensure a more productive and efficient school for your child.

HEALTH CARE AND SAFETY

Medical and Health Information:

The following forms are required by Florida state law to be completed before the first day of school (Aug 21): Up-to-date immunization forms, School Entry Health Examination Form, and any necessary *Physician Authorization for Medication/Treatment Forms*. School policy prohibits faculty or staff from administering oral medication to any student without parental permission. Only valid medical exemptions from childhood vaccinations will be accepted. Religious exemptions are not acceptable for any required immunization.

Safety Drills:

Fire and Lockdown drills are conducted periodically to ensure our children's safety during the unlikely event of a fire or security breach.

Lice:

The school will conduct an in-school lice check during the first weeks of the school year and after extended vacations. Students found with lice will be sent home at the end of the school day and allowed to return only after treatment has begun. (per CDC recommendation).

HOMEWORK (see Appendix B for more detailed information)

Amount of Homework:

Homework is designed to be a relatively quick, focused review of skills and information already learned in school. Shorashim Academy's homework policy is that there should be ten minutes total of homework per grade. i.e. first grade= ten minutes and 2nd grade =20 minutes. If your child is taking more time than that to complete his homework, please communicate with his teacher.

Homework Communication:

Teachers may email the day's homework information directly to parents or share it via Google Classroom. This information is intended to serve as backup support and should not replace the student's own responsibility for staying informed about their assignments.

FOOD

Lunch/Snacks:

All students will be eating lunch in Soref Hall and bringing lunch from home (until further notice). Out of respect for all of our students, only kosher food is allowed for lunch and snacks. Please minimize sending "junk food" for a snack.

Drinks:



All children are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle with them each school day to remain properly hydrated. Drinks in glass containers may not be brought to school.

MEET THE TEACHER NIGHT

This year, Meet the Teacher Night is Thursday August 17th at 6:00-7:30 PM. Any parent needing extra time for individual concerns, should arrange for an individual telephone call or school visit.

PARENTS ON CAMPUS

In order to ensure a secure and uninterrupted school day, parents are permitted on campus solely for prearranged meetings or designated classes/events. This includes the first day of school. Our administrative team will assist with late arriving and early departing students as well as delivering lunches and other situations. This restriction applies to after school hours as well. See below concerning in-school birthday parties.

While there are no clothing regulations for adults, all visitors are expected to dress appropriately.

PARTIES

Out-of-School Birthday Parties:

Birthday invitations may only be distributed in school if inviting all classmates. Parties must either include less than 25% of the class or 100%. Anything in between will cause unnecessary hurt to some classmates. Gifts and party favors should not be brought to school. Children should be told not to discuss parties they attended. Out of respect to all our students, please do not host parties on Shabbat, and please make sure that all food served at parties is kosher.

In-School Birthday Parties:

Contact the teacher to arrange a suitable time to mark your child's birthday (later in the school day is preferable). Food served must be store-bought with acceptable kosher supervision. If you have questions about this, ask an administrator, as we want to avoid any uncomfortable situations where we are unable to serve the food that you've purchased. Please check with the teacher to see if any class members have any other food allergies as well. We recommend cupcakes, and ask that you do not bring in candy in addition to the cake. Balloons and gifts are not to be brought to school. A maximum of two adult family members may attend, as well as only siblings that currently attend Shorashim Academy.

PEANUT POLICY

As of this writing, no students who are enrolled at Shorashim Academy reported a peanut allergy, and so there are no restrictions regarding bringing peanut products to school. Should that change, we will inform you.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

All students will have at least 50 minutes per day of exercise and recess. We recommend that students wear sneakers daily for playing on equipment and on the field. Girls who enjoy active play should wear shorts underneath their skirts.

PTA

Our active Parents' Association serves an important supportive role in enhancing the children's educational and social well-being. You are urged to volunteer and get involved. Please contact Dr. Berman for more information. .

SCHOOL TELEPHONES / MESSAGES

The school office telephone is reserved for official business. Students may receive or initiate calls only in an emergency. Important messages will be transmitted by the school office staff. (See section concerning cell phones.) Dial the main number (786-579-9918) and follow the prompts.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

For the 2023-2024 school year, student supplies must be ordered by the parents. Backpacks do not have to be see-through but may not have wheels.

SECURITY

All Shorashim Academy parents will be given decals that allow them onto the Soref JCC campus. Parents are asked to cooperate fully with instructions from security personnel.

STUDENT RECORDS

The school is in compliance with The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act – FERPA - which gives parents the right to inspect and review education records and the procedures to do so; to seek amendment of records the parent believes are inaccurate and the procedures to do so; to consent to disclosures of education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and to file a complaint with SPPO (Student Privacy Policy Office) concerning potential violations.

VISITORS' ATTIRE

All visitors are expected to dress appropriately for a school setting.

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS AND EMERGENCIES

In the event of an impending storm, the administration will cancel school on a case by case basis. There will be no school if a hurricane warning is in effect in Broward County. For any other set of circumstances or other emergencies, parents are encouraged to visit our website for



updated information regarding school closures. In addition, a text, whatsapp, and email message will be sent.

STATEMENTS OF POLICY

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY:

Shorashim Academy admits all Jewish students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin. All scholarships and programs are administered in a non-discriminatory fashion as to race, color, national or ethnic origin.

ADMISSION POLICY:

Admission to Shorashim is open to any student who demonstrates minimal academic ability for the age-appropriate grade level. An entrance examination and interview with the principal are part of the admissions procedure.

DISMISSAL POLICY:

Dismissal from Shorashim Academy is the final step of the discipline program in use at the school. A student who is overly disruptive or is a potential threat to the other students may be dismissed to protect the other students and to maintain Shorashim Academy as a safe and secure environment in which to study. Full due-process rights for the student and parents are guaranteed including the right to an open hearing and the opportunity to present the student's position.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal.

Excessive absences from school is grounds for dismissal.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL CULTURE

The Shorashim Way:

At Shorashim Academy, we prioritize providing a safe emotional and social space to grow. Creating a positive school wide culture and atmosphere falls squarely in Mrs. Koppel’s domain. Our goal is for our students to embrace and internalize the Shorashim Academy Way—to be safe, respectful, and responsible everywhere and at all times. Below are some plans to achieve that goal.

- Mrs. Koppel plans to meet with all classes during the first days of school, read her favorite books on positive behavior, and begin to create a common language that all adults and children at Shorashim Academy can use.
- Emphasis should be placed on creating a respectful atmosphere of common courtesy, including cleanliness- especially in bathroom areas- and personal dignity. Aesthetics featuring student art and student work and topics of interest to children should be featured.
- We will recognize examples of safe, respectful and responsible behavior during the morning assembly. A culture of kindness, its creation and reinforcement, will be the goal. Morning announcements during assembly will be among the first activities of each day and will remind students to be safe, responsible and respectful to all. This will help begin the day on a positive note and promote the Shorashim Academy Way.
- We want our students to know the three Shorashim Academy behavior principles that we call “pocket principles.” Our pocket principles (principles we want students to have in their “pockets” at all times) and examples of each principle can be found in the below chart. These three principles will be taught, modeled, and celebrated throughout the school. Please discuss, encourage, and reward your children when they act this way at home.

Safe	Respectful	Responsible
Keep hands, feet, and your body to yourself Use only kind or neutral words	Say please when you ask for something and thank you when you receive something	Being on time to and attending school every day Complete all homework to the best of your ability

<p>Walk (unless in an area where running is appropriate)</p>	<p>Allow a waiting adult to walk through a doorway before you do</p> <p>When an adult greets you, you should respond by saying good morning or good afternoon</p> <p>Thank people when they do something for you</p> <p>Make eye contact when speaking to others</p>	<p>Give your best effort on all assignments and tasks</p> <p>Cleaning up after yourself everywhere</p> <p>Giving your teacher 100% of your attention</p> <p>Accept responsibility when you make a mistake and say sorry</p>
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- Children who struggle with desired behaviors will immediately be identified and supported. Processing and dealing with social bumps as needed is part of growing up. It's important to us that children have support when necessary. We want to know what's going on in the lunchroom and during recess. We want to know when teachers think something unusual is happening. We will help with a plan of support, whether to help a shy child find his voice among others or to help a more impulsive child to become more aware of her impact on others and how to become more sensitive. We care about the development of these skills and support their development when appropriate.
- We are smilers. We believe it is contagious. Our students are deserving of a cheerful and courteous environment throughout the school. We believe in modeling pleasantness and encouraging it as a life skill that supports the building of successful interpersonal relationships as well as facilitating success in getting one's goals met. A pleasant, friendly, and respectful demeanor is a Shorashim Academy expectation.

Discipline at Shorashim Academy:

Students will not always act according to the Shorashim Academy Way. Teachers should handle discipline problems in their classes. Discipline and safety are provided by teachers. That is part of building trust. There should be the same expectations every day. It is reasonable and kind when consequences are predictable and avoidable and are the same for all. For a student, feeling safe in a classroom means knowing that the teacher means what she says and that there is accountability for student behavior and respect for her rules. We support teachers building and maintaining a culture of respect to classmates and teachers alike. We believe that children

are capable of adherence to standards and are happiest when given the respect they earn by being accountable for their actions. When mistakes happen, they should be seen by teacher and student alike as opportunities for growth. The student and his family are the beneficiaries of this philosophy.

To encourage the Shorashim Academy Way, teachers will use their internal system of behavior management toolbox which will likely include the teacher’s own system of rewards and consequences, celebrating students who follow expectations, speaking privately with students who don’t, and communicating with parents to share both positive and negative news. If and when teachers exhaust their toolbox, and a child continues to prevent the teacher from teaching and other students from learning, the teacher will contact administrative personnel who will escort the student to Mrs. Koppel. If Mrs. Koppel is not on campus, the student will be brought to Dr. Berman and/or Rabbi Melnick. The administrator will use the safety rubric (see below) and a behavioral matrix (taken from MDCPS) as the basis for planning next steps.

Unsafe Behavior Rubric:

Definitions

- **Not being where one is supposed to be-** leaving the class without permission, not entering the classroom when one is supposed to, etc.
- **Hurtful Action-** hitting, pushing, kicking, grabbing, slapping or any other action that could injure another student (including play fighting)
- **Hurtful Words-** speaking in a way that causes hurt to others

BEHAVIOR AND CONSEQUENCES DURING ONE GRADING PERIOD (All incidents will be documented in Jupiter)			
First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Fourth and Above
Warning	One inside recess. Administrator calls parent without student present to inform parents of the behavior that needs to be changed. Parent will be notified that if there is a 3rd incident, we will be counting on them to implement a system of rewards and consequences that we will assist in creating .	One inside recess. Administrator calls parent with student present. Partner with parents to create plan involving a system of meaningful rewards and consequences.	Escalating consequences, which may involve sending the student home. Administration meets with parents.

- Severely unsafe behaviors or bullying will lead to more serious consequences.
- The Behavior Matrix that we will use at Shorashim Academy is as a separate document. We are happy to show it to anyone who would like to see it.

APPENDIX B

HOMework

It is the student's responsibility to complete the homework. It is the parents' responsibility to enable the student to do so. There are few things that are more undermining to a child's progress in learning than coming to school without homework completed. Written homework, like any other work a child produces, is a reflection of a child's motivation, interest, pride and responsibility. All homework should be neat and presentable, and indicate a child's best effort. Sloppy and/or torn papers are unacceptable.

Following are a few guidelines for your involvement with your child's homework:

- Take a sincere interest in your child's homework. Emphasize that doing homework with quality and neatness is very important. Periodically, take the time to look at the actual homework your child has done so you are aware of academic progress and that the work is presentable.
- Help in a positive, caring manner rather than in a detached and impatient one. Help with homework; do not do it for your child.
- If your child objects to your help and gets upset, he or she is sending you a message. It may be wise to tactfully investigate the reason for your child's negative reaction. Is he exerting independence, reacting to work that is excessively difficult for him, or concealing his/her messy paper? It is important to look into the matter.
- Do not criticize the school or teacher in front of the child for giving too much homework or for any other reason. If you feel your child has too much work, speak to the teacher about it.
- Look for things to praise – a neatly written paper, an improvement in spelling, a period of time of quiet concentration. Praise should also be given when an assignment is completed.
- If your child comes home regularly with the report that "I don't have any homework" or "I did it all in school" – check with his/her teachers. "Do you have homework today?" is an appropriate question to ask your child once he/she has had a few minutes to unwind upon returning from school.

- If the work consistently (not just once in a while) seems too difficult or time-consuming, find out from the teacher where the source of the problem may be.
- Some practical suggestions for helping your child do homework are to:
 - Have a set homework area at home – whether it’s a quiet room or in the kitchen – there must be consistency; (Let your child decide, with your guidance, then make sure he/she sticks to the decision.)
 - Your child should have a homework kit with all the necessary supplies immediately accessible. Speak to your child’s teacher about what this kit should include.
 - The time for homework should be set in advance rather than being haphazard. A (written) weekly schedule is suggested that includes snack time, time for lessons, time for free play, time for homework, time for supper, after supper activity, and bedtime. It can vary each day, but if it’s set in advance, each afternoon/evening can be a nice blend of work and play, rather than time for unpleasant parent/child struggles. Give your child choices of time and place, wherever possible.
 - Upon completion of homework, your child should place all necessary papers, books and supplies in his/her backpack before going to bed. Make sure the parent has signed if requested by the teacher.