

PROJECT OF KINGS BAY Y



PARENT HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026

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Welcome to JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill

PROJECT OF KINGS BAY Y

Drawing inspiration from Jewish values and culture, we aim to nurture the growth of the whole child in a caring, loving environment. We are looking forward to a rewarding journey together as your child grows as a unique person and a cherished member of our school community.

In order for us to ensure a smooth and effective program, the JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill Early Childhood Program has compiled the following policies and procedures for parents. We ask for your full cooperation and support by reading and complying with these policies.

Required Paperwork

The following forms and conditions must be met before beginning the school year:

- Financial obligations as agreed to in the JCC Brooklyn/Kings Bay YM-YWHA Contract must be met in full.
- An up-to-date medical form with a full immunization record must be on file. **JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill cannot accept students that are not fully vaccinated.**
- Pick Up Authorization
- Sunscreen Form
- Trip Authorization Form
- OCFS Health Screening Form
- Autopay Form
- Completed Emergency Card (updated each year)

Financial Obligations

Should families wish to withdraw from the program at any time during the year, our usual 30-day notice provision will apply. **Please note that the first and last month of the school year program [September and June] are not refundable under any circumstance.** Should we be ordered to close by the city, county, state, or federal officials at any time, families will be required to meet their financial commitment for the duration of that calendar month so that we can continue to compensate teachers through the end of the month. After that time, no further charges will be made until we're open. (For example, suppose we were ordered to close from December 12 through February 10. Families would be required to pay their tuition through December 31, and teachers would be compensated through December 31. There would be no charges for the month of January, and charges for February would be prorated). If we are required to close for a short period of time, there will be no refunds granted.

Educational Philosophy

JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill is a loving and caring community that embraces all families. We are dedicated to providing our students with a learning environment that nurtures their growth, curiosity and self-esteem. Our aim is to provide opportunities for children to develop a lifelong passion for learning, to get to know and love themselves as individuals and as members of a caring, cooperative learning community.

We are a progressive school grounded in the philosophy that children learn best through play. Our lively, hands-on curriculum is developed through direct observation of students' interests and individual needs. Through exploration both in the classroom and outside, we engage children's curiosity, imagination and their five senses. In partnership with families, we strive to provide opportunities for each child to develop cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally at a rate that is most appropriate for him or her.

Jewish Life

JCC Brooklyn is a pluralistic Jewish Community Center located in three physical sites (Windsor Terrace, North Williamsburg and Clinton Hill) as well as in pop-up spaces. We are inspired by Jewish values and ideas and we welcome all families regardless of background.

A joyful introduction to Jewish life, culture and holidays is part of each child's experience at JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill. Children become familiar with songs, customs and stories to expand their knowledge of holidays and Jewish values. The joy of Shabbat is shared by our classrooms together each Friday and we learn about and celebrate Jewish holidays and customs throughout the school year.

The curriculum at JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill uses a framework of Jewish lenses through which day-to-day experiences become meaningful building blocks for identity formation and growing kind and caring members of society:



- Masa – Journey (Reflection, Return, and Renewal)
- Tzelem Elohim – Divine Image (Dignity and Potential)
- B'rit – Covenant (Belonging and Commitment)
- K'dushah – Holiness (Intentionality and Presence)
- Hit'orerut – Awakening (Amazement and Gratitude)
- D'rash – Interpretation (Inquiry, Dialogue, and Transmission)
- Tikkun Olam – Repair of the World (Responsibility)

Children of all ethnic and religious backgrounds are welcome to enroll, and differences in their backgrounds are recognized and respected. While Christmas, Easter, Halloween and Valentine's Day (as well as other non-Jewish holidays) are not celebrated at school, please be assured that a child's mention of any home celebration is always a welcome topic in the classroom and will be treated with respect and interest.

JCC Brooklyn's *B'rit Kehillah* - Commitment to Respectful Communal Behavior

JCC Brooklyn is a pluralistic Jewish Community Center inspired by Jewish values and ideas that welcomes all families regardless of background. This *b'rit* (Hebrew for sacred agreement) establishes each individual's commitment to maintaining a school and a community environment grounded in mutual respect and a sense of personal responsibility.

As a member of the JCC Brooklyn community, I affirm that I will:

- Treat all others with *kavod* (honor and respect) in recognition of each individual's dignity and potential
- Communicate my thoughts in a courteous, timely, and considerate manner and respond similarly to others' communications
- Refrain from any behavior that could be construed as sexually harassing, demeaning, hurtful, bullying, or inappropriate

I understand that JCC Brooklyn reserves the right to exclude any individual who fails to adhere to these standards of behavior in any interaction with staff, parents, or other members of the community.

Sign and Return

Please tear off this page, then sign and return to the front desk.

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the policies and procedures laid forth in the JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill Parent Handbook (2025-2026).

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill

2025-2026 School Calendar

As of July 2025

Date	Event	Additional Details
Tuesday, September 2	Parent Orientation Night ZOOM at 8	<i>Attendance is mandatory for at least one parent/caregiver per family.</i>
Wednesday, September 3	Classroom visits with teachers - In-Person	<i>Teachers will reach out in August to schedule</i>
Thursday, September 4	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL! Dismissal at 12 pm for New Students Dismissal at 3 pm for Returning Students	<i>New Students – Returning Students – parents or caregivers on-call</i> No Late Stay
Friday, September 5	Phase in schedule Dismissal at 12 pm for New Students Dismissal at 3 pm for Returning Students	<i>New Students – Returning Students – parents or caregivers on-call</i> No Late Stay
Monday, September 8	First Full Day of school Early and Late stay begins [advanced registration required]	<i>New Students– parents or caregivers on-call</i>
Monday, September 22	Erev Rosh Hashannah Pick-up by 3pm for all classes	No Aftercare Pickup by 3PM
Tuesday & Wednesday September 23-24	Rosh Hashanah School Closed	School Closed
Sunday, September 28	Rosh Hashanah Community Event (Prior registration is encouraged)	All are welcome- (10 am-12 pm)
Wednesday, October 1	Erev Yom Kippur Pick-up by 3pm for all classes	No Aftercare Pickup by 3PM
Thursday, October 2	Yom Kippur	CLOSED

	School Closed	
Tuesday, October 7	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8PM
Monday, October 13	Indigenous People's Day – School Closed	CLOSED
Friday, October 17	Pizza Shabbat (Prior registration is encouraged)	5-7PM
Monday, October 20	Professional Development Day	CLOSED
Tuesday, November 4	Election Day – School Closed Parent Teacher Conferences	<i>Teachers will reach out to schedule</i>
Monday, November 11	Veterans Day – School closed	CLOSED
Sunday, November 23	Special Person and Grandparents Day ((Prior registration is encouraged))	All are welcome- (10 am-12 pm)
Wednesday, November 26	Pick-up by 3pm for all classes	No Aftercare
Thursday & Friday November 27 & 28	Thanksgiving Break – School Closed	CLOSED
Tuesday, December 2	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Friday, December 5	Pizza Shabbat (Prior registration is encouraged)	5-7PM
Sunday, December 14	Hanukkah Community Event (Prior registration is encouraged)	All are welcome- 10 am-12 pm
Monday, December 23	Pick-up by 3pm for all classes	Aftercare (3 pm – 6 pm) NOT AVAILABLE
Tuesday, December 24 – Friday, January 2 2026	Winter Recess – School Closed	CLOSED
Monday, January 5	School Resumes	
Tuesday, January 6	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Monday, January 19	MLK Jr. Day – School Closed	CLOSED
Friday January 23	Pizza Shabbat (RSVP Appreciated)	5-7PM
Sunday, February 1	Tu Bishvat Community Event (Prior registration is encouraged)	All are welcome- (10 am-12 pm)
Tuesday, February 3	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Monday, February 16– Friday, February 20	Mid-Winter Recess – School Closed	CLOSED
Monday, February 23	School Resumes	
Sunday, March 1	Purim Community Event	All are welcome-

	(Prior registration is encouraged)	(10 am-12 pm)
Tuesday, March 3	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Friday, March 20	Parent Teacher Conferences School Closed for students	<i>Teachers will reach out to schedule</i> (School CLOSED)
Friday, March 27	Pizza Shabbat (Prior registration is encouraged)	5 – 7PM
Tuesday, March 31	Pick-up by 3pm for all classes	Aftercare (3 pm – 6 pm) NOT AVAILABLE
Wednesday, April 1 – Friday, April 10	Spring Recess and Passover – School Closed	
Monday, April 13	School Resumes	
Friday, April 24	Pizza Shabbat (Prior registration is encouraged)	5 – 7PM
Monday, May 4 - Friday, May 8	Teacher Appreciation Week	
Tuesday, May 5	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Monday, May 25	School Closed for Memorial Day	CLOSED
Tuesday, June 2	PTA Meeting	ZOOM 8 PM
Friday, June 19	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL – 12 pm Dismissal Bumblebee Graduation	

**Mini Camps are offered during some school closures with sufficient pre-registration (10 or more students/Program). Additional fees apply.*

TBD

Annual Fundraiser

2nd Professional Development Day

Your Child's First Days at School

Starting the school year is a big step for a child. Adjusting to new places, people and routines is a process of developing trust in their teachers and the school environment. Each year support from parents and caregivers is an integral part of the process.

Our policy for all students is to provide an adjustment period (or "Phase-In" period). We ask that a parent or caregiver be readily available during the phase-in period for extra support should it be necessary.

Phase-In

Your child's first days at school are the Phase-In period. The time it takes to acclimate to their new school depends on your child's age, class schedule and individual needs. This gradual beginning gives each child a chance to get to know his or her teachers, classroom and routines, and to become comfortable in a new group setting. Please be on call and nearby the first week in case your child has a tough time acclimating to the schedule and teachers. We understand that our Phase-In week can be inconvenient for families and we appreciate your cooperation during this period.

Phase-In begins BEFORE the beginning of the school year, during a family classroom visit that will be scheduled by your child's teachers. During this classroom visit your child will be the focus. Please pose any questions during Parent Orientation, held via Zoom the evening before.

Arrival and Departure

Children on a regular schedule should arrive and be signed in between 8:30 and 9:00 as well as picked up and signed-out promptly at 12:00 (half-day); at 3:00 (full-day); by 6:00 (late stay). Drop-off takes place in front of the school. A health check will be completed in the classroom. Please ensure your stroller is folded before handing it to staff to be stored until pickup.

Be sure to sign your child in at drop off and to sign your child out at pick up. If someone new will be picking up your child, notify our staff beforehand. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO SOMEONE OTHER THAN A USUAL CAREGIVER WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT AND IDENTIFICATION.** If your plans for the day change, please call the school to make arrangements.

Please make verbal contact with our staff at drop off and let us know about anything unusual regarding his or her routine, mood or physical status. We would appreciate it if you email us about any changes in your child's behavior or physical condition.

Late arrival: Let your teacher know in advance if your child will be late. Late arrivals are discouraged unless your child has a doctor's appointment. We do not accept arrivals after 11:30AM. There is no drop off for aftercare only.

Full Day Early Pickup: By 12:30 as not to interrupt nap.

*Early drop off available beginning at 8am
*Aftercare available until 6pm

Arrival

Showing up on time is a necessary part of your child's routine.
Be sure to sign your child in. Please try to avoid engaging with teachers other than concise updates regarding your child. It is very important that the teachers be focused on welcoming the children and starting a new day together.

Departure

Be sure to sign your child out.
If someone new is picking up your child, written consent must be given ahead of time.
There is a 5-minute grace period until you begin to accrue additional late fees.
Only collapsing or umbrella strollers can be left at school.



*JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill is not responsible for any items left in the pickup/dropoff area.

Parents and Our Community

Parent presence and involvement is a crucial part of our school community. There will be many opportunities throughout the school year for parents to assist in different capacities with school and community events such as holiday celebrations. If you or someone in your family would like to volunteer time/activity space/resources, please speak with your child's teacher.

Class Parents

Your teachers will request one or more parents volunteer to be Class Parents. Class Parents assist teachers with parent communication about general upcoming events, classroom needs, special projects or when volunteers may be needed.

Parent Committee

The JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill Parent Committee is a working group of parent volunteers and staff dedicated to advancing the quality of the Child Care Program. The committee organizes, helps to plan, and participates in a variety of school and community-wide events and fundraisers.

Clothing and Cubby Items

We cannot overemphasize the importance of sending your child to school in simple, washable clothing. It is inevitable that clothing gets dirty when children play. It is also extremely important that fastenings be simple enough to encourage your child's independence in toileting and dressing.

ALL ITEMS MUST BE CLEARLY LABELED

When soiled clothing or sheets and blankets are sent home, please launder and send back replacements on the next school day. Full day students' sheets and blankets will be sent home weekly.

Your child's cubby should always be stocked with:

- Diapers / Pullups and wipes (if not toilet trained)
- 1 sweater / sweatshirt
- 1 change of underwear
- 1 change of pants
- 1 shirt
- 1 pair of socks
- 1 pair of extra sneakers
- 1 sheet & blanket for full time children (crib size sheets fit our rest mats very well)

Bringing Toys to School

If your child needs to bring a favorite toy to school, we do not object. Some children need the comfort of a special toy from home to help make the adjustment to school or to nap comfortably. We do ask families not to bring toys unless they are necessary because they get lost, broken and may cause problems between classmates.

Guns and war toys are not permitted in school. For very young children the line between reality and pretend can be blurred and we find that these toys encourage reenactment of "action" media which can lead to play that is too rough.



BIRTHDAYS

A birthday party at school is a very important occasion in the life of your child. All children look forward to this event with great anticipation. What makes it special is not so much the party food, but rather that it is their day, and the attention is focused on them. We ask that you bring in a cupcake (or other small treat) for each child with a candle for the birthday child.

Please be sure that each treat is the same and refrain from choosing more than one color. Every child will have an opportunity to celebrate a birthday in school. Teachers will be happy to arrange "Special Day" celebrations for children with summer birthdays. Please make arrangements for a celebration with the teachers ahead of time and check for allergies to specific foods.



LUNCH, SNACKS, FOOD & ALLERGIES

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Lunch is stored in your child's cubby. Please send in an insulated lunchbox with an icepack to keep food cold or a thermos to keep it warm. We encourage parents to pack foods for lunch that are easy for children to eat independently.

We provide shelf-stable snacks such as crackers, rice cakes, and dried fruit during the school day and Aftercare. You are welcome to include supplemental snacks for your child in their lunch box.

We are a nut-free school. If your child has any allergies, please notify the school immediately so appropriate precautions can be taken.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. These conferences are for parents only and provide an opportunity to sit down with your child's teachers to discuss progress, interests, friendships and goals for your child. If you wish to discuss something of immediate importance, please be sure to call or email for an appointment. We are ALWAYS happy to arrange the time to discuss your child with you.

Please DO NOT engage the teachers in conversation when class is in session, especially during arrival and dismissal times. Their responsibility at this time is the children.

Support for Students with Special Needs

Children learn and grow in their own individual ways. We strive to make the classroom a place of exploration, challenge and success for all of our students. In some cases, Special Education evaluations and/or services are recommended. Services may include, but are not limited to: Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy or the assistance of a SEIT (Special Education Itinerant Teacher).

If a child in our school receives special education services, an educator from the team is selected to be the "team leader." In this role they will schedule meetings for all parents and pertinent educators, ensure that communication is maintained, and monitor progress toward educational goals. Please provide your child's teachers and the school director with any documentation you have (IEP, etc) to support us in specifically tailoring the classroom activities to your child's individual needs and strengths.

Health and Illness

Every child is required to have an annual physical examination by their own physician within one calendar year of their start of school.

A Department of Health Form is provided to each family in their enrollment packet. This must be filled out by your child's doctor and returned prior to the beginning of school. **YOUR CHILD CANNOT BE ADMITTED ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL WITHOUT A FULLY COMPLETED HEALTH FORM.**

If your child has a temperature 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher please keep them home. If they develop a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit we will ask you to pick them up. If they are feeling unwell and are unable to participate in their school day, we will also notify you. Children can return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours **without medication** or with a doctor's note.

- Your child should be kept home if they show any sign of illness and should come back to school only when they can participate in the full program of their class both indoors and outdoors. We have no provisions for caring for children who are sick. Please notify the school as soon as possible if your child will not be in attendance because of an illness.

- If your child has had an illness lasting more than one week a doctor's written consent is required for your child to return to school.
- When your child has been ill with a fever, they may not return to school until they are fever free (without fever-reducing medicine) for at least 24 hours.
- In case of a contagious childhood illness (i.e., HFM, pink eye, stomach virus, lice, flu) parents are asked to notify the school immediately, even if this occurs during vacation periods within the school year. If your child has lice (or nits), they will not be allowed to remain in school. Teachers will do periodic head checks as prevention, but it is expected that a close eye is kept on the situation at home.
- If your child has a rash of unknown origin they must be seen by a physician. A doctor's note saying that the child is not contagious is required in order for the child to return to school.

The school will notify you if a teacher observes that your child has become ill during school hours and cannot fully participate in class activities. You will then be expected to arrange for your child to be picked up and promptly taken home.

Parents will be notified by the school if a child in the class has a contagious disease.



A doctor's note is required for your child to return to school after the following conditions:

- Any illness lasting more than one week
- Pink Eye
- Rash / Other skin irritations
- Chicken pox, scarlet fever, other highly contagious infections
- Diarrhea

Behavior Management Policy

Young children are in the process of learning how to communicate with others and express their feelings. Often behaviors that are viewed as undesirable are an attempt at communication. Our goal is to help children to develop self-control, self-confidence, and to form satisfying relationships with peers and other members of the community. To this end, teachers will focus on positive behaviors and reinforce these as often as possible. Each classroom environment and routine will be age-appropriate in order to foster a joyful and nurturing experience for each child, which is conducive to positive behaviors. Along with positive reinforcement, teachers will redirect children as needed to help them make good choices. Teachers and children together will create class rules (e.g. keep hands and feet to our own bodies) in order to maintain a respectful and safe environment for all. This process of creating and referring to class rules helps children to understand the expectations for behavior.

With the help of parents, we strive to understand a child's experience of being in school. Whenever possible, we will modify the classroom to accommodate the children's needs. Inappropriate behaviors will receive firm and consistent messages with the aim of helping a child developing more self-control. Children will always be treated with love, care and respect.

Children will be directed to a "rest spot" when teachers determine that a child needs to "take a break." Examples of times when a child may take a break include engaging in aggressive behaviors and not responding to redirection by teachers. The rest spot is not punitive: instead it is a cozy quiet place that provides a moment to take a breath and reset. Children will be in the rest spot for a maximum of one minute per year of age. Before rejoining the group, a teacher will speak with the child to make sure that the child understands the behavior expected of him/her.

If a child's behavior disrupts the functioning of the class, the child may be removed from the class until she/he is ready to rejoin the group in a productive way. In this case the child will always be in the company of another teacher or staff person.

Parents will be called in case behaviors such as hitting and biting. Parents of recipients of hitting and biting will also be called. Teachers will communicate with parents in the case of disruptive or harmful behaviors and together we will develop a strategy to address these behaviors. If needed, parents may be advised to have a specialist observe their child for possible support services. If, after our school has made efforts to accommodate a child, the child's behavior continues to disrupt class or the child continues to harm other children, the child will be asked to leave the school.

Children will always be treated with respect. Any form of corporal punishment, abusive language, withholding or threatening to withhold food or access to bathroom, shaming, isolating child or other punitive actions are prohibited.

Safety and Emergencies

We take the utmost care to prevent emergencies from occurring. However, in the rare event of an emergency it is important that our families know what to expect.

Emergency Cards

Each family will be asked to complete emergency cards. In the event of any emergency or illness you will be called. If you cannot be reached, the emergency contacts indicated on your cards will be called and asked to come to pick up your child. Bearing that in mind, be sure that your emergency contacts are close enough to respond quickly to an emergency.

Illness or Injury to A Child

Parents will be contacted to bring a child home promptly if emergency medical care is not deemed necessary. A sick or injured child will be transported to the hospital for emergency care if required. If it is necessary to call 911 for emergency personnel, parents will be called immediately afterwards once help is on the way.

Missing Child

Our teachers take tremendous care that no child is ever left unattended. To prevent any confusion, children are not released to their caregivers or parents until they have been signed out on the class clipboard. In the unlikely event that a child is missing in the building we will initiate lockdown procedures until the child is located.

During class trips, teachers constantly count (and recount) the children in their groups. If it is ever discovered that a child is missing on a trip, children will be re-grouped and the immediate area searched for no longer than 3 minutes before calling 911 and alerting appropriate site authorities. The school director and parents will be called immediately after 911. The group will remain with one teacher while chaperones and staff conduct a search until the child is found.

Evacuation of the Building

Our school conducts fire drills during the school year in order to ensure that our staff and students know how to evacuate safely and quickly. In the event of an actual emergency, staff will evacuate children as planned moving them down the block past the school building. In cold weather, if possible children will enter the lobby of one of our neighboring buildings. In the event that it is not safe to stay in the immediate vicinity, JCC Brooklyn Clinton Hill has an arrangement with P.S. 56 (located at 170 Gates Avenue) to allow our students to wait there until they can be picked up by a caregiver or parent. In this event, families would be notified after evacuation was safely completed.