

Parent Handbook



GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN

Licensed Family Home Daycare
Licensed Childcare Provider: Maayan Gadisman

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PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Updated 7/28/2021

You have received this handbook as a partner in your child's development at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN. This parent handbook outlines the expectations, policies, and procedures of the Gan, or playgarden. After reviewing this document, please sign and return the consent form on the last page to the childcare owner, Maayan, before or upon touring the facilities. This consent form states that you understand and agree to adhere to all expectations, policies, and procedures of this learning environment. This handbook will be updated from time to time, and the most up to date copy will be made available to you. Thank you for being a part of the GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN Family.

WHO ARE WE?

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we believe that each child has the potential to blossom and thrive when given the right tools and space. By providing an open outdoor environment, carefully selected toys, and a strong daily rhythm, children can flourish in body, mind, and spirit. At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we nurture a respectful and caring bond with each child, inspired by Magda Gerber's 'Educaring' and her RIE techniques. We believe even the youngest children deserve respect while being cared for.

The Arts of daily living are another mainstay in our program, as we follow the Lifeways program in which "Life is the Curriculum." This includes the nurturing arts of rest and play, domestic activities such as caring for chickens or baking bread, and artistic activities like watercolor painting and beeswax crayon drawings. We provide healthy meals to nourish the body and support the developing mind. We rely on sturdy daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms so that the children may relax into the familiar flow of the day. Seasonal changes are marked by observing nature and celebrating our annual holidays, based upon the Hebrew calendar.

Social development is one of the most important benefits of sending a child to a group childcare, and we find opportunities throughout the day to learn about emotions and promote social learning. Other aspects of cognitive development may include self-control such as listening to a story, following directions such as cleaning up particular toys, and impulse control when another child takes a toy away and we learn to use our words and gentle hands with our friends. We believe that these foundations allow for a healthy academic education later in childhood, but that the early years must be enveloped in wonder, beauty, and exploration.



OUR VALUES

This program is a Waldorf-inspired home childcare playgroup. Most toys in the program are open-ended, meaning that they do not have a strict purpose or directions. This allows for children's imagination and creativity to direct their play. Most items at Gan are made of natural materials such as wood, silk, cotton or wool, which provides children with an authentic sensory experience. We may even explore how objects are made, sanding and hammering wood, or raising silkworms, for instance. We incorporate RIE techniques and play-based learning. The program has influences from earth-based Judaism, as the lens through which we appreciate and care for our environment (tikkun olam), find ways to give (tzedakah), and take the time for moments of tranquility throughout the day (shalom). We mark the cycle of the week with a special story and challah making on Friday mornings, and the changes of the seasons are celebrated through Jewish festivals, with a Waldorf flair.

Please note, this is a safe space, warmly welcoming to people of all religious and cultural backgrounds, and is LGBTQI affirming. We seek to provide an anti-bias education, and celebrate diversity. When possible, we love having parents with native languages other than English join to share a favorite song, story, activity or food with the playgroup that introduces their language and culture. We are always looking for new ways to develop a more multicultural and inclusive program. Although the festivals have Jewish influences, this is not a religious program.

MISSION STATEMENT

- Our aim is to nurture the children in our care with respect and tenderness, and provide opportunities for them to grow and learn.
- We seek to create a community of families who share the same commitment to celebrating childhood, and the rights of children to learn through play, exploring nature, and growing their confidence as they become more independent.
- Children in our program learn to work and live together, resolve their conflicts, and listen to others while also learning to advocate for themselves.
- GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN is designed to feel like a home, and our playgroup is meant to feel like a family. We believe that children learn many wonderful skills when they are sharing a playspace with children of varying ages, learning from the older friends, and teaching and caring for the younger friends. We spend as much of the day together as we can, just as they would in a large family!

A LOOK INTO OUR PROGRAM

8:00-9:30	Drop-off, Sensory activity, Small Snack
9:30-10:30	Backyard time or Walk
10:30-11:00	Snack, Circle time
11:00-11:30	Indoor play
11:45-12:30	Lunch Time
12:30-1:00	Storytime, Rest, First Pickup
1:00-2:30	Naptime
2:30-3:00	Indoor Play, Snack, 2nd Pickup

*Exact times may vary

Our little ones love learning through all of their senses. We explore anything and everything we possibly can, discovering different insects, plants, and animals in the backyard. We collect eggs, and care for the chickens and quails. We harvest vegetables and tend to the garden. Our older kids love to find new ways to use our open-ended toys, creating new inventions and artistic creations. The older children in the group often enjoy special responsibilities in the Gan, such as putting together obstacle courses for the little ones, helping set and clear the table, and setting a good example at circle and story time. Socialization is very important as the children begin to share, use their manners and learn to take turns. We learn how to work together and how to conquer obstacles by ourselves. Our kiddos are well on their way to a successful journey into the older ages!



DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION

We believe that families and early childhood educators hold a responsibility and essential role in raising tomorrow's conscientious members of society. Actions of discrimination, bullying, mockery and other mean-spirited behavior will not be tolerated at Gan Aviv.

Keeping in this vein, our doors are open to families of all backgrounds. Cultural, gender and family diversity is truly celebrated in our program! We are always looking for diverse representation in our stories, books, songs and toys to share with our children, so that they are exposed to the many

ways that we are different as humans, and the many ways that we are also the same! Because children as young as 3 are known to identify and begin to form opinions about race and gender, we believe that this is the best way to set a foundation for them to celebrate diversity just as much as we do. We love when parents and other family members of the children in our care come to visit, to share songs, food, or stories with the Gan. Please arrange a visit with Maayan if this sounds appealing to you!

A word about family inclusion- at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we welcome all types of families- foster parents, grandparents, legal guardians, single parents, same-sex parents, adoptive parents, families with both parents working and families with stay-at-home parents, all are EQUALLY important and included in our Gan Aviv family. When our paperwork includes the language 'parent' please know that this means each of you! We work hard to foster an inclusive school community, and will do our best to build strong relationships with all of our families to make sure that they feel accepted, respected, and valued.

Note: Inclusion benefits all children in the program! Children with special physical or emotional needs will be accepted if the program is determined to be in the child's best interests, and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and loving environment for them. We are happy to work with the child's therapists or other specialists to develop an individualized plan if necessary, so long as no individual's safety is being jeopardized.

OUR CURRICULUM

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM

At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we provide our students with a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is based on the teachings of Rudolph Steiner and Waldorf Education. We also incorporate California standards. NAEYC, which is the National Association for the Education of Young Children, defines developmentally appropriate curriculum as "methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning." Our curriculum is developed through our students' interests and real life experiences in the world around them. This includes the books we read, the stories we tell, the art projects we explore, and the toys that are made available.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Our developmentally appropriate experiences and activities, such as reading books together, singing, art activities, puppetshows and games provide meaningful learning opportunities which incorporate early literacy concepts. Language skills are developed through exposure to new vocabulary terms during storytelling, rhyming as we sing, phonetics games, exposure to books with

printed text and much more. Strengthening these skills provides the framework for reading and writing skills when your child is ready, later in their lives.

In addition, we incorporate exposure to other languages when possible. Hebrew phrases and songs may be included throughout the day, and we have Spanish books and songs to share with the children, as well. We also encourage parents and family members to visit the Gan to share songs and phrases in their native languages. Recent research shows that exposure to new languages while maintaining the home language stimulates brain development and increases literacy skills in both languages!

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: SCIENCE, MATH AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Cognitive development means how children explore, think, create answers and figure things out. It helps children to think about and understand the world around them.

Math

Early math skills involve children learning the basic concepts of numbers, counting, simple addition, and subtraction. In our program we believe in learning through doing. For example one-to-one correspondence, or the understanding that objects can match a number, may be applied while setting the table for four, and needing four bowls. Even in the early years, we may begin learning numbers with fingerplays, such as 1-2-3-4-5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive. Some other important math concepts children will be 'working on' through play are: patterning, classification, spatial sense, ordering/seriation, and parts/whole. We believe in trusting the child to learn the concepts that are appropriate for their individual development at the pace that is right for them.

Science

Scientific development in young children happens naturally. They use their senses to develop curiosity, observe, compare, make predictions, classify, and construct hypotheses. Students are eager to explore the world around them. At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN our job is to nurture their scientific spirit and provide students with the opportunity to explore through exposure to nature and wonder about the world around them. A teacher's common answer to their many queries is, "Hmm, I wonder..?" More often than not, the children have their own theories they can't wait to share with us!

Social Studies

Here at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we explore different traditions, places, foods, music and families of the people in our community and around the world. Social studies begin as children make friends and participate in decision-making in the classroom. Then it moves beyond the Gan (playgarden) into the neighborhood. We learn about the workers that we see and hear: the delivery driver, the trash collector, the gardener, the firefighter. Then we learn about archetypal professions and characters through stories and books: the cobbler, the baker, the blacksmith. We hear tales and fables from

cultures around the globe. Finally we learn about the greater world, with many different styles of foods, houses, and music. We invite parents to teach our playgroup a song, rhyme, story, or share foods from their native culture or language. We celebrate the elements that make us unique, and the elements that are shared amongst us and others around the globe.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

Children's emotional well-being during their early years has a powerful impact on their social relationships throughout their lives. Children who are emotionally healthy are able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults and their friends. Social-emotional development involves more than just expressing emotions. It involves taking turns, becoming independent, following routines, interacting with peers verbally and through body language, engaging in meaningful relationships, controlling and managing emotions, and developing a positive and loving self-image. We also learn resiliency, how to pick yourself up, how to ask for help, and how to persist at challenging tasks. These skills are crucial for children's successful participation in all aspects of life, in school and home experiences, and for their overall positive self-growth.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: FINE AND GROSS MOTOR

Fine Motor:

Fine motor skills involve movement of the smaller muscle groups in your child's hands, fingers, and wrists. While hand-eye coordination comes far more naturally to some, for others it can be a challenge. Children learn how to control their muscle movement in their hands in order to obtain hand-eye coordination. There are specific ways we do this in the Gan such as having your child pick up sunflower seeds and cranberries at snacktime, coloring with different shaped crayons, cracking eggs, kneading dough, and pouring their own glasses of water from a small pitcher. These skills can turn into more advanced ones later on, like when your child decides they want to knit, play the guitar or write a book!

Gross Motor:

Gross motor skills involve movements of the large muscles of the arms, legs, and torso. It is these larger muscle groups that allow babies to sit up, turn over, crawl, and walk. By playing actively indoors and outdoors, each child develops muscle strength, endurance, agility, coordination, balance, and flexibility, as well as building confidence and social skills. The space is set up to encourage the development of gross motor skills, with a sloped backyard and many logs to build or balance on. We regularly set up an 'obstacle course' for the children to walk on a low balance beam, hop from one sturdy stump to another, crawl under a chair and more! We allow children to develop their own sense of safety, and may prompt a child to check in with their body if they feel unsafe or too high.

Nonetheless, if a toy is being used inappropriately, we may close that area or let the item 'rest.' All hazardous tools or substances are locked according to licensing regulations.



SENSORY EXPLORATION

Sensory exploration is a child's way of examining, discovering, categorizing, and making sense of the world. Here at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN, the child participates in activities that allow them to explore different types of materials and textures, and enhance their senses such as while making bread, playing in the sandpit, gardening and exploring materials that have a variety of smells, textures and tastes. Indoors, the toys are primarily constructed of natural materials- a wooden tree figure, cotton fingerknit ropes, rainbow silks, pine play kitchen. These toys allow children to have an authentic sensory experience throughout their play time.



ART, MUSIC, DANCE AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION

At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we encourage and provide opportunities for our students to explore creative expressions such as art, music, dancing, and dramatic play. The creative arts engage children's minds and bodies and allow them to use their imaginations, senses of movement and rhythm, and enjoy color and sound. Teachers plan activities to introduce children to different kinds of art media, music, and movement to stimulate the student's creativity and imagination. Throughout the day opportunities are presented for playing with water, sand, dirt, flowers, and various food items that they help cook. Musical experiences are present throughout the indoor and outdoor play spaces, such as wind chimes, maracas, and triangles. We do circle time daily with movement and singing. During naptime children listen to teachers sing and play gentle music on the flute or pentatonic lyre.

ANIMALS

Animals are an important element here at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN. Daily opportunities to pet, watch, and care for animals are a great way for children to build empathy, learn about where their food comes from, and build a sense of responsibility. Children may help bring food, collect eggs, or bring fresh sand to the quails and chickens from our sand pit. In addition, we have a large, very friendly dog named Kali. She loves to lay at our feet, and wags her tail when any of the kids laugh or approach her. During times of excitement, she is kept indoors or on a leash, but in general this is her home and she is allowed to roam freely. Please note, she has never shown any aggression whatsoever- not around food, aggressive dogs, or children including when they are less than gentle. If your child has any fear of animals or you have any concerns, please notify Maayan as soon as possible to discuss and determine whether this is the best program for your family.



ADMISSIONS

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

To enroll your child at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN your child must be between the ages of 18 months and 4 years at the time of enrollment (we may make exceptions for). Children must be up-to-date on their vaccines. Parents must guarantee financial means to pay tuition fees, establish a payment plan or provide proof of enrollment in other financial support programs. Parents must read through and sign the handbook and Parent Agreement Packet, agree to all terms and policies, and attend a tour of the facility before enrolling. During the tour, parents/ guardians are encouraged to bring a list of questions AFTER reading the handbook and policies, so that we can address your concerns and questions before your child's first day at Gan. All required forms, contracts and fees must be paid/submitted at least one week before the trial period begins.

REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS

The following must be submitted on Brightwheel to reserve your child's spot at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN:

- Registration Fee, Trial Period Tuition
- Signed last page of Parent Handbook
- Parent Agreement Packet
 - o Child's Medical Information and Release Form
 - o Parent/Guardian Contact Information Form
 - o Parent Notification Form
 - o Notification of Parents' Rights
 - o Medical Release Form

ENROLLMENT FEES

- Registration Fee \$100, nonrefundable. Holds your child's spot in the program.
- Trial period Tuition Fee: first two weeks tuition according to agreed upon schedule.
- Regular tuition: paid every two weeks, due a week before date of care.
- Last 2 weeks Tuition Fee, due one week before care begins, refundable until trial period has ended.
- Materials fee \$150 per year, due annually after the first 6 months of care.

*Rate increases will be made annually to keep up with cost of living.

*Regardless of the program option your child is enrolled in, every child is required to pay for a full time position for the last two weeks. This will fully cover your child's last two weeks of enrollment, regardless of any fee rate or program selection changes.

*Ask for a pricing list for up-to-date tuition costs.

SPECIAL DISCOUNTS

- 10% off sibling discount
- 10% off if you pay 3 months full-time, non-refundable tuition in full.
- Scholarship or sliding scale may be made possible. If this is of interest to your family, please speak with Maayan to determine current availability.

SIBLING ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

Siblings are given priority into the school but are not guaranteed a spot. Families receive a 10% discount off of the lowest monthly tuition. Payment is processed through the Brightwheel profile of the first (or youngest) child enrolled. If parents intend to withdraw children from the program, we require 6 weeks notice in order to replace multiple spots. Upon the receipt of a written notice through text or email, a final charge will be made to your account for each child, with the last two weeks of tuition having been paid upon registration.

WAITLIST INFORMATION

To join GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN's waitlist, parents/guardians must complete a waitlist application. The \$100 non-refundable registration fee is due to hold your child's spot on the waitlist, after touring the facilities. Paying the refundable trial period tuition for the first two weeks of care is due one week before the trial period begins, once a space becomes available.

CLASSROOM PLAY DATE AND FACILITIES TOUR

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN allows a 30 minute scheduled playdate onsite, prior to the child's trial date. This must be scheduled and confirmed with Maayan. Please bring a signed copy of the last page of this Handbook. The playdate is a time for the parents to watch their child play, explore the space, ask any questions about the handbook and policies, and inform us of any important things we should know about your child. After we have each had a chance to consider whether this would be a good fit for your family, you may contact Maayan to confirm your interest in the program, fill out and sign the Policies and Agreements forms, send your child's vaccination records, and pay the tuition for the trial period, and last two weeks of care.

ITEMS TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY OF GAN

Your child must have the following on their first day of school:

- Pair of closed toed indoor shoes
- Pair of closed toed outdoor shoes
- Proper outdoor wear including boots and raingear (rainy months)
- Clean, weather appropriate clothing (please send your child in clothing that you are ok getting dirty- we will do our best but mud, paint, food and sand are all fair game at Gan!)
- Bathing suit and towel if appropriate (hot months)
- 2 extra sets of clothes brought in a Ziplock bag, including weather appropriate extras such as a short-sleeve shirt or sweater if they are not wearing that when they come in.
- A soft toy or blanket if desired for nap time (+24 months)
- Pacifier if needed (only used at naptime)
- Cloth diapers if needed (disposable diapers and wipes will be provided)
- Sleepsack if needed
- Milk or formula and glass bottles if needed
- Weather appropriate hat
- Bathing suit and towel if appropriate (hot months)
- Water bottle or sippy cup
- Bag or backpack

*We provide sunscreen, diaper cream, wipes, diapers and meals. If you prefer to send your own supplies, we will do our best to accommodate, but may also use these items for other children (ie sunscreen may be used on all children in care, not just your child).

*We discourage bringing toys from home, and will encourage kids to keep them in their bags. If you do bring these items from home, we cannot guarantee they will not be lost or damaged.

UPDATING FORMS FOR YOUR CHILD'S FILE

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN requires all parents/guardians of enrolled students to keep their child's forms up to date with their current medical and emergency forms. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all school forms are current and updated. Administration has the right to not allow the student into the school if any forms are missing from their file after 2 notices from administration.

PAYMENT POLICIES

PROGRAM OPTIONS

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN offers the following program's

18-24 MONTHS	9A-11A	9A-1P	9A-3P
24 MONTHS to 5 YEARS		9A-1P	9A-3P

*We offer additional hours at \$10 with prior arrangements. Please discuss with Maayan before enrolling.

*If you decide to begin part time and intend to extend the day or week as the child becomes accustomed to the program please let us know! We encourage this, especially within the first month or two after enrolling. This will count as a full time, priority registration.

*Please note: if your child is not able to sleep or rest quietly for at least 45 minutes during nap time after 2 weeks, we may ask that your child go home at the 1P pickup time. This decision may be made at the administration's discretion. This downtime is just as essential for staff as it is for the children.

REGULAR TUITION FEE BI-MONTHLY

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN processes tuition payments bi-monthly, on the Monday before each payment period. All payments must be done through Brightwheel autopay.

*If alternate payment arrangements must be made, please discuss with Maayan before enrolling.

MATERIALS FEE

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN charges an annual fee of \$150 for supplies and toys, beginning 6 months after your child's start date. We use high quality arts supplies, toys, and other materials, which must be replenished throughout the year. We also understand that toys and books break when being used by even the most careful children. Rather than tracking each toy and its cost for replacement, it is our policy to include this as an annual fee that goes towards the general upkeep of the indoor and outdoor play spaces, toys, and materials being used.

LATE PAYMENT FEE

In order to avoid late payment fees, we strongly encourage all parents to enroll in autopay through Brightwheel. Should a late payment occur, we will charge \$20 after the third notice, plus an additional \$15 per day for each day up to 14 days. At this point, childcare services will be suspended until the total balance has been paid. The program relies on tuition in order to operate, thus the child's place in the program may be forfeited at the administrator's discretion.

EVALUATION OF TUITION RATES

All families will be notified of annual changes of tuition rates 3 months prior to when they go into effect. This enables the family time to be aware of the changes in prices and to contact administration with any questions or concerns prior to the fee change. Please expect a fee change at the beginning of each school year, August 1.

ABSENCES

At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN, we rely upon tuition to keep the program running, thus we are unable to provide refunds or make up days. In the case that your child plans to miss more than 2 weeks of childcare, please contact the school in advance to inquire whether a financial arrangement is possible. This is not guaranteed, and may only be possible if another child is able to fill that place. Should your child miss more than 2 full weeks of childcare due to a family emergency or illness, please speak with Maayan as soon as you are able to arrange tuition discount at 60% of your normal rate or possible suspension of fees. This is fully at the administration's discretion, and may require a doctor's note to be eligible. Should the program need to close for more than two weeks, such as in the rare case of a family emergency or illness in the home, we will notify parents as soon as possible, and charge tuition at 60% in order to hold the child's spot in the program.

VACATIONS

Families who choose to remove their child from the school for more than 2 weeks may lose their child's place in the program. In order to keep the child's spot, please provide a month's advance written notice to Maayan. Families may pay 60% of the child's tuition to reserve their current spot in the program. Families who do not pay will not be guaranteed a place when they return. Should the program be closed for more than 2 weeks for a vacation, tuition fees may be put on hold until the program is back in service.

HOLIDAYS AND CLOSED DAYS

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN is closed for all major national holidays as well as Jewish High Holidays Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, for synagogue attendance. In addition, we will have 25 paid vacation days (listed below as *Spring, Summer and Winter Vacations*). Parents will be given at least one month prior date confirmation notice for planned vacation days. We will do our very best to avoid closing the Gan, and understand that this may pose a significant challenge for parents. In the case of illness in the childcare home we may need to close the program. If the illness persists more than

one week in a row, we will provide a partial refund for paid tuition. In order to maintain your child's spot in the program, we will charge 60% of your regular tuition costs until the home is cleared to open according to our most updated illness policy. We will not put your family's health at risk in order to open before it is safe. Thank you for understanding the reasons that our program may need to close, and we strongly recommend that you have alternative childcare options available in these rare cases.

Current planned holidays 2021: Labor Day September 6, Rosh Hashanah September 7, Yom Kippur September 16, *Fall Vacation* (October 1), Indigenous Peoples Day (formerly Columbus Day) October 11, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, *Winter Vacation* (December 24-January 1), Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, *Spring Vacation* (~April 1-16), Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day + *Summer Break* (~July 1-8).

ARRIVING LATE AND EARLY

Drop off: This is our home and we ask that you respect your agreed upon schedule. Should parents arrive more than 5 minutes before drop off time, we may still be preparing for that day and unable to care for your child. With prior arrangements, we may be able to set up an early drop off at the rate of \$5 for every 10 minutes they need to be here before your agreed upon drop off time. Please arrange this at least 24 hours ahead of time when possible. If you are running late, staff must be notified ASAP. Be mindful that late drop offs impact the child's sense of flow for that day, and interrupt play for the other children. If we are at the park or in the middle of an activity that should not be interrupted, we may ask that you wait in the car until the activity is over.

Pick up: If you are running late, we request that you call to inform the school, but please understand that this does not excuse the late pick-up charges. Beyond 5 minutes, parents are required to notify staff if they are running late. After that, a charge of \$5 for every 10 minutes will be incurred, and beyond 30 minutes after business hours end we may need to call social services. We understand that things happen sometimes, but a pattern of tardiness will jeopardize your child's place in the program. Staff have other obligations in their lives and may be unable to care for your child.

The school will take the following steps if the employee has not heard from the child's parent/guardian 20 minutes after the school has closed:

1. The employee will attempt to call the child's parents at home and work.
2. The employee will then attempt to reach the people listed on the student's Pick Up Authorization Form, and the student's Emergency Contact Information Form.
3. If no approved pickup person can be reached or made available, Maayan will call the authorities and notify them of the situation.

In the case of a family emergency, please contact the administration to see if we can help. There is no guarantee we will be able to offer help outside of regular hours of operation, and we highly recommend that all families have backup childcare options available.

WEATHER POLICY

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN is an all weather program. We expect your child to come with waterproof gear during rainy seasons, a winter hat and appropriate clothes in winter months, and a sun hat and appropriate clothes and sun hat on hot days. Although we also encourage application at home, sunscreen will be applied at Gan, and water play will be an almost daily occurrence during summer months. Clothes may get wet or be removed while children are playing in the sprinklers. Parents are invited to send bathing suits or sun guards at their discretion. When the temperature goes above 100 degrees or AQI levels are high, the morning program may move indoors, where AC and air purifiers will be running. If parents prefer, they may opt to keep their child home on those days.

WITHDRAWAL AND DISCHARGE POLICY

WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

Withdrawing your child from GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN after the 2-week trial period: Starting the first day of care, a 30-day written notice is required. After notification, your child is entitled to finish the previous pay period plus one more pay period. This will count as your final 2-week tuition which was paid upon enrollment.

Withdrawing from the program before your child's 2-week trial period has ended, or up to one month before the trial period: if already paid, you may be refunded for the materials fee or final 2-week tuition fee, but will not receive a refund for the first two weeks of care or the registration fee.

Withdrawing from the program more than a month before your 2-week trial period begins: you will not be refunded the registration fee, but may be refunded for materials fee, and final 2-week tuition fee.

DISCHARGE POLICY

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN has the right to terminate a child's enrollment under specific circumstances. These include any child who after many attempts does not progress in their behavior and whose behavior is affecting the group as a whole. This also includes any child whose needs cannot be met by the school's philosophies. Many attempts will be made prior to discharge, in order

to help the child thrive in our environment. These include observation notes, therapy referrals and an individualized behavior plan to be used at home and onsite at Gan.

When the efforts to bring about positive change in behavior have been exhausted, parents and administration will meet to determine the next course of action, or consider whether this program is serving your child's needs.

Please note, GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN reserves the right to refuse care for any reason including but not limited to: a family's failure to pay their balance, failure to observe policies regarding drop off or pickup, failure to treat staff, administration, and children in the program with respect and kindness, failure to observe privacy in regards to information about the children, staff, or those living in the home, sharing private or untrue information on the internet including slander or libel. Immediate termination may include a refund of unused tuition at the administration's discretion.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Upon arriving to Gan, you may park on the street or behind the teal Prius. We encourage parents to bike to Gan, and have a bike rack in the front yard for your convenience. Please lock your bike, if it is left outside. Parent's must walk their child up to the front gate and may knock, then please wait for me to open. Please encourage your child to hang their backpack on their assigned hook and put on their hat by themselves if possible. Maayan will give them a hug or a warm good morning smile, depending on the child's preference, and take their temperature. Parents may speak briefly with the teacher about any urgent matters but are encouraged to keep any communications brief and discreet so as not to influence their child's play. At that point they may do a goodbye ritual, such as sitting on the potty or helping them to their 'seat' to pour a glass of water and eat some snacks. Then say goodbye and leave. Children with separation anxiety benefit from a brief and regular drop off routine, and we will do our best to update you about their progress throughout the day for the first challenging days. We are always happy to give many extra hugs for the challenging transition periods, and send photos and updates to parents until the child has settled in.

*At this time we are asking that all parents wear masks when they are at the facilities, and are limited to outdoor spaces. This is a COVID safety precaution and we appreciate your compliance.

DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

If you pick up your child more than 10 minutes beyond your agreed upon pickup time, you will be charged a late fee that will accrue with the amount of time you are late. See LATE PICKUP

CHARGES section for details. If you plan to pick up your child earlier or later than the agreed upon time, please notify administration at least 2 hours prior through text or email. Early pickups without prior notification may interrupt meals, activities, or naptime and we may ask that you wait in the car until we are able to bring your child to you.

Upon picking up your child, you are responsible to grab their belongings. This includes their backpack and any artwork or paperwork we may have for you. We ask that verbal communications with the staff be kept brief and discreet so as not to influence the child's play or distract from staff's ability to provide care for the other children. Parents are encouraged to communicate by phone between 5-6p daily, or through email. We may be unavailable outside of that time frame.

PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

For the safety of the child, the only people authorized to pick up a child are those designated by the parent/guardian on the child's approved pick-up list. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the person(s) listed, a written note authorizing pick up must be received prior to pick-up time.

Pick Up Authorization Process:

- Parents must inform GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN in writing (leave a note at drop off, text or email) of the name of the person who is picking up their child on any day when they themselves are not. Prior notification is strongly encouraged to avoid miscommunication.
- The "Authorized Pick-Up Person" **must be at least 18 years old** and may be asked to provide a photo ID to the staff.
- This authorization shall remain in force until edited or rescinded in writing by the signers of this authorization.
- If at any time we feel that a parent, guardian or anyone authorized to pick up or drop off the child is under the influence of alcohol and/or any other toxic substance, or is otherwise a danger to the child, the school may refuse the release of the child and the school will contact another authorized person to come and collect the child, explaining the circumstances. In some cases, an incident of this nature could lead to a referral to our governing bodies and a call to social services.
- We will charge late fees starting 10 minutes after the child's regular pickup time.
- Parents have 30 minutes to arrange an alternate pick up by an approved adult, and will be charged late fees according to our regular late fee policy. After that, social services may be called.

GENERAL EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

RATIOS & STAFFING AT GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN always provides the sufficient number of staff for the capacity of the play space. This means that student to teacher ratios established by licensing are always followed. We are currently licensed to have 6 children to 1 adult. Most of the day, the ratios will be closer to 3:1. Staffing will depend on the ages and needs of the child in the program.

ABOUT US



My name is Maayan and this has been a dream of mine since I began assisting in the Davis Waldorf Preschool and Parent Toddler classes in 2017. I have worked in many Waldorf and Lifeways early childhood educational spaces, including kindergarten, preschool, and home daycare programs. I have taken the Waldorf Teacher Foundation Studies in both Israel and the Bay Area programs, and currently attend the Lifeways Certification Training graduating Winter 2021. I have taken 5 classes in Early Childhood Education through Sacramento City College and also hold a BA in Anthropology through UCSC. I am licensed with the state of California for a small family daycare. This includes a 9 hour pediatric and infant CPR/First Aid/AED training as well as an 8 hour Health and Safety training. I am also a Birth Doula, certified through DONA, and have taken the postpartum doula training. My life's passion is supporting the delicate, magical early childhood years, as well as the mothers and families of the children during this foundational time. I am honored to open my home as a nurturing space for children, a 'home away from home', in which they may grow and explore surrounded by the safe, loving arms of a caregiver who truly cares, and to provide a sense of community to the families of children in my care. This home may serve as a central point to foster an exchange of support and resources for all families who join us at Gan Aviv.

Currently Harriet (referred to lovingly as "Cookie" by the children) is volunteering half days with the Gan. She retired in June of 2021, after 27 years as an elementary school teacher with the Davis Joint

Unified School District, and almost 40 years of teaching experience in total. We are so lucky to have her, and her library of stories, fun songs, and joyous loving presence that she brings to every moment! Cookie regularly practices yoga and Jewish meditation. She has a BA in Human Development and an MA in Educational Administration.

YUMMY, IT IS TIME TO EAT!

THE FOOD

The quality of food is so essential to the building of healthy bodies and minds! At GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN we ensure that every meal includes fruit and/or vegetables, we strive to buy organic, seasonal and local to maximize nutrition and sustainability. We offer a variety of foods, rotating based on the days of the week, so that children have a range of nutrients to nourish them. Eggs and dairy such as milk, cheese or butter may be served on occasion along with dairy-free options. Although we do not serve meat during the program, we do cook meat in the home and do not always maintain kosher practices. If this is an issue for you, please notify us so that we can find a solution for your family.

Please notify us if your child has allergies or dietary restrictions, including keeping kosher.

MEALTIMES

At dropoff, a light bite is available. This often includes dried fruit and sunflower seeds, nuts, or crackers with water or tea.

Morning snack is served around 10a, which often includes a sandwich with nut butter and jelly, and fresh or dried seasonal fruit.

Lunch is served around 11:45a and rotates based on the day of the week, but always includes a vegetarian protein, a whole grain such as rice, tortillas or pasta, and a choice of two or more vegetables. Afternoon snack is served at 2:30p, which often includes fruit and yogurt, fruit smoothies or something similar.

We will do our best to ensure that choking hazards are limited or avoided based on your child's age. If you have specific concerns or preferences please discuss these with Maayan.

Fresh drinking water is freely available to all children at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN at all times. Water dispenser jugs are refilled at The Nugget or Davis Food CO-OP. Children will always have water available from their personal water bottles. Water bottles are sanitized daily and, when used,

glasses are washed after each use. We prefer that you leave your child's water bottle here while enrolled at Gan Aviv.

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN offers milk, water or juice to children for lunch. Water or tea is served at snacktime in the morning and afternoon.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL DIETS

If a student has an allergy or dietary restriction, please notify the school upon enrollment. This is shared with staff and kept in the child's file. This information is also posted in GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN's kitchen for all to be aware.

Depending on the seriousness of the allergic reaction, parents may be asked to complete a Food Allergy Information form. All forms must be filled out fully and accurately before the child's first day at Gan.

FOOD FROM HOME

For many reasons, we prefer not to have food brought from home. Exceptions may be in the case of an infant who is still drinking breastmilk or formula. If a mother chooses to breastfeed, she may make arrangements with Maayan to schedule a time to visit. We prefer that milk is dropped off with the child in a labeled, insulated lunch box with ice packs. Parents are responsible for picking these up daily and sanitizing bottles after use.

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN loves to celebrate your little one during their special day! We will be baking treats together at Gan, so please do not bring any additional snacks from home unless special arrangements are made with Maayan, such as in the case of a dairy or gluten allergy.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

INSURANCE COVERAGE

Our liability insurance is through DCINS, Daycare Insurance.

STATE REGULATIONS AND LICENSING

All GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN employees must be knowledgeable in the state's childcare licensing rules and regulations. A copy of the state and local guidelines is kept in the school at all times, and each employee receives their own copy upon hire.

CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE

All GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN employees are screened by the appropriate law enforcement agency using the California state background check system upon being hired. Adults will never be alone with children on premises. All staff or volunteers ARE NOT EVER physically, verbally, or emotionally abusive towards children.

In addition, all employees receive child abuse and neglect mandated reporter training. At the first reasonable cause to believe that child abuse exists, the reporting adult will immediately inform the Director who will determine the action to take. An immediate phone call to the local law enforcement will be made by the reporting adult. A written report, as a backup to the phone report, will be completed and filed with the administrator. Child abuse need not be verified before a report is filed, nor may it be investigated by GAN AVIV staff. We understand that cultural differences may account for a discrepancy in child care and discipline philosophies, but our legal responsibility is to report suspected abuse, and allow social services to determine what has occurred.

SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONICS

We discourage the use of electronics and media during early childhood, ages 0-7, and especially during the sensitive years of 0-3. We are happy to share further information on the effects that electronic media has on the child's developing brain. Remember, television is different than it was when we were kids. The rapid movement, flashing images and loud sounds are designed to capture children's attention but also increase cortisol and other stress hormone levels, and affect the child's natural hormone cycles. Another reason we prefer children to avoid media is that it affects their play. When they have one idea of what a princess looks like, or already know the story of Elsa, for example, their play becomes limited and stagnant. When children can use their imagination to play, it is their creativity that creates the storyline. That being said, we completely understand that avoiding media entirely is not possible for all parents, and it can be a useful tool in particular circumstances. We recommend that families consider taking a 'media diet,' limiting the amount of screentime and what their child is watching. Slower moving images, with less flashing, is better. Some suggestions include Mr Rogers Neighborhood, Bluey, our local Waldorf teacher Emily Lalande does puppetshows on youtube, and Amy's Daisys has circle times on youtube, and we are happy to share other resources that work for your family, judgement free!

Upon enrolling a child into the program, we ask that all parents/guardians fill out a social media questionnaire release form. We occasionally share images of children at play in our newsletters and on Instagram. If you prefer only images that do not show your child's face, or no images at all, we will be happy to honor that. During business hours, phones may be used for brief parent communications through text, or to write notes or take photos. We do our best to limit the use of electronics in front of children, and only make phone calls to parents in emergency situations, such as after an injury.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Childcare programs maintain **confidentiality** of sensitive information on a "need to know" basis. This information is shared only when it is necessary. This is important especially when there are specific health and safety emergencies. State and Local Laws prohibit the sharing of information about children or employees without written approval from the parents.

HAZARDOUS ITEMS

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN follows strict precautions in regards to hazardous items. All hazardous chemicals are kept out of reach in locked cabinets or off the premises entirely. No guns are allowed on the premises whatsoever. Dangerous substances, equipment, and medicines are kept locked and out of reach. This policy aims to protect the employee, children, families and visitors from the risks associated with hazardous items and substances according to licensing regulations and our own additional precautions.

BITING

Biting is a behavior that is often unexpected and one that can harm and frighten others. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. Most times it is a temporary behavior and one that is seen between the ages of 11 and 24 months old. Toddler's bite others for many different reasons. A child might be teething, feel tired, angry, frustrated, or even bite when they are overly happy and excited. Toddlers do not have strong verbal skills, are impulsive and lack strong self-control and it is important to remember that they are developing these abilities at their own pace. Biting can also occur for no apparent reason, happen quickly and can be shocking to observe. Our primary concern at GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN is the safety and health of the children and our staff. We take positive, constructive and meaningful ways to stop these behaviors. The biting child learns empathy by caring for the injured child. We keep a close eye to better understand what may be prompting this behavior, and intervene when possible. Should the bite lead to bleeding, we will call both sets of parents after washing and covering it with a bandage. A minor

bite will be treated and discussed with the parents at the day's end. If repeated bitings occur on the same day, this may prompt staff to request that the parents pick up the child early.

If more than 3 bites occur in a week, we will add a note to the child's file and may set up a meeting with parents to discuss an action plan. If the biting becomes excessive and the school's techniques have been exhausted, GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN has the right to discharge the student. Please note, many measures will be taken prior to it getting to this point, but we must create a space where all children in our care feel safe. In some situations, this environment may just not be the best for this child.

POTTY TRAINING

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The Potty-Training Process at Home and School

GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN requires the potty-training process to begin at home. The process should begin when the child has begun expressing interest in the potty, does not like having their diaper soiled, or asks to the potty. It is best to begin when the parents and child can be dedicated to the process, and there are not a lot of changes coming up in the child's life.

The Process at School:

A successful weekend at home is defined by the child having 3 or less accidents and remaining excited about the process. If your child goes more times during the weekend on the toilet, than in their underwear, this is a sign of success!

1. Notify the teacher that it was a successful weekend through an email, text or face-to-face conversation.
2. Bring plenty of extra clothes and underwear in case of accidents. If we run out, we may use pullups or borrowing clothes. Soiled clothes will be put into a bag and the parents can decide to wash or toss.
3. When arriving to Gan, walk the child to the outdoor potty and show them how it looks just like the one at home. Stay a minute to have the child sit down, if they choose, and become comfortable with a toilet outside of their home.
4. The teachers will bring the student to the bathroom every 1.5 to 2 hours.
5. If you prefer your child to use pullups during the potty-training process, please notify us. We do prefer this when we move indoors and always put a diaper or pullup on during naptime until potty-training is complete.
6. Notes on the potty-training process at school will be provided to the parent.

- Please note- diapers and pullups will be provided. If you choose to put your child in underwear, it is your responsibility to take home any soiled clothes daily to be cleaned and sanitized.

ATTIRE FOR CHILDREN

It is very important that your child wear clothing that is easy to manage and safe for the activities they will be participating in while at school. Dress your child in simple, comfortable clothing that is washable, you don't mind getting dirty, and is appropriate for the weather. Please remember in choosing their clothing that children paint, play with mud and water, and participate in movement activities on a daily basis. Children must wear comfortable shoes that are closed toed. No flip flops allowed for safety reasons.

Don't forget to include a change of clothing to be left in your child's backpack. We recommend that clothing items be labeled with the child's name. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged clothing items. If your child is sent home in borrowing clothes, we ask that you wash and return them in a timely manner.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

GAV AVIV PLAYGARDEN focuses on daily rhythm, modeling behavior, and positive reinforcement to reduce the need for discipline. We believe in helping children problem-solve amongst themselves when possible, providing appropriate words to communicate their needs and frustrations. When problems occur, we use a positive approach to discipline, trying to understand what the child needs and provide the tools to help them help themselves. When children receive positive feedback, they develop problem solving abilities, self-discipline strategies, and a stronger sense of self love. We believe that even the most destructive behavior is a form of communication, and it is our job to try to understand the behavior and use it as a learning opportunity.

WHAT WE DO!	WHAT WE DO NOT DO!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Communicate to children using positive statements (ie "You may put that down gently.") □ Communicate with children on their level. □ Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child which includes any physical force to the body. □ Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child. □ Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explain unacceptable behavior to children. <input type="checkbox"/> Give attention to children for positive behavior. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage children who are using their words. <input type="checkbox"/> Set clear limits for the children. <input type="checkbox"/> Apply rules consistently. <input type="checkbox"/> Model appropriate behavior. <input type="checkbox"/> Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Help children talk out problems and think of solutions. <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires and feelings. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts. <input type="checkbox"/> Use storytime characters and mealtime discussions to work through common conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use food as a form of reward or punishment. <input type="checkbox"/> Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment. <input type="checkbox"/> Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs. <input type="checkbox"/> Embarrass any child in front of others. <input type="checkbox"/> Compare children. <input type="checkbox"/> Place children in a locked and/or dark room. <input type="checkbox"/> Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow discipline of a child by other children. <input type="checkbox"/> Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss behavioral issues in front of other children in the care except when necessary to help them understand.
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WHAT WE DO WHEN PROBLEMS OCCUR

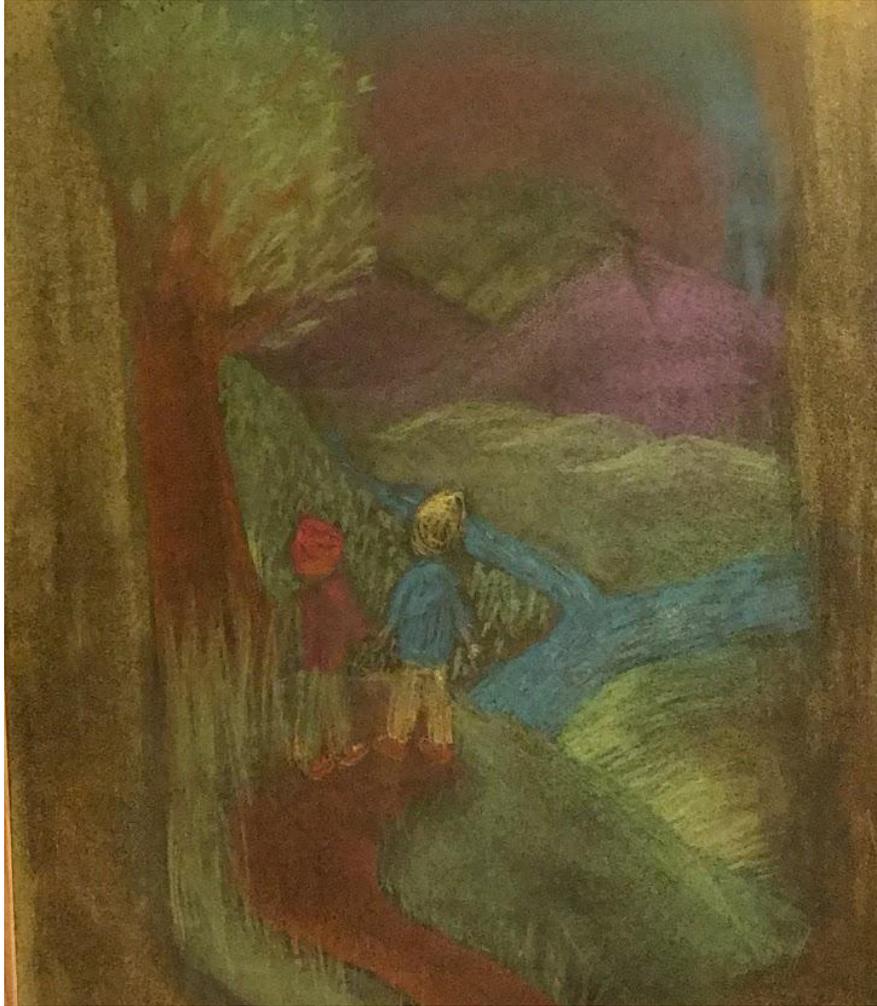
When a more serious or consistent disciplinary policy occurs, a conference will be scheduled with the teachers and the students' parents. Observations, accident reports and other important documentation relating to the events will be presented and used as evidence. We will happily speak with your child's private specialists to create a behavior action plan.

ASSESSMENTS, OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS

ASSESSMENTS AT GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN

We reserve the right to conduct developmental assessments of children's growth and progress to determine appropriate programming, and areas of focus. This may include observation notes, video recordings, checklists or other assessment tools. If you are interested in a parent-teacher meeting, we offer these twice a year with advance arrangements, in order to share a summary of our observations, examples of art, and photographs of activities taken over time to track your child's development, we will follow primarily Waldorf standards of assessments, and honor the range of 'normal' when addressing developmental markers, while doing our best to assess milestones of development appropriate to your child. If we have concerns that prompt the recommendation of a professional assessment, this may be appropriate at times. Parent-teacher conferences also provide a chance for the teacher and the parents to form a more personal relationship to ensure the school is meeting the family's standards and so that the teacher can understand the family setting the child has outside of the school's doors. We will not pass judgement and appreciate your trusting us with these insights into your child's life.

Our staff appreciate when parents share professional evaluations for insights on behavior and to determine how best to meet the needs of the child. This information helps us to provide the best care possible for your child's unique growth and development. All sensitive information will be kept confidential within the Gan Aviv staff.



Please print ONLY this page, not the entire handbook. Also available under "Forms" on the website.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

Today's Date: _____

- We _____ &
- _____
- the parents of _____ have received a copy of the GAN AVIV PLAYGARDEN Parent Handbook.
- I agree and understand the policies and procedures listed in this handbook and will comply with the childcare's rules and regulations.
- If I have any questions or concerns, I will discuss them with Maayan, the childcare owner.
- I understand that the policies and procedures listed in this handbook are subject to change to reflect licensing guidelines and the needs of the program.
- I understand I will be made aware of these changes in a timely fashion, and I will always adhere to the most up-to-date handbook.
-

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

