



Full Circle Preschool Parent Handbook

Ohavi Zedek Synagogue

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	Page 3
Shared Beliefs and Values.....	Page 3
Non-Discriminatory Practice.....	Page 4
Curriculum and Pedagogy.....	Page 4
Judaism.....	Page 4
Nature Connection.....	Page 5
Daily Schedule.....	Page 7
Learning Environments.....	Page 5
Staff.....	Page 8
Communication.....	Page 8
Outings and Community Involvement.....	Page 9
Family Involvement.....	Page 10
Confidentiality.....	Page 10
Enrollment.....	Page 10
Withdrawal.....	Page 11
Termination of Enrollment.....	Page 11
Tuition and Payments.....	Page 13
Safe Sleep.....	Page 18
Universal Pre-K Funding/Act 166.....	Page 14
Attendance, Signing In/Out, Accountability.....	Page 24
Late Pick Up Policy.....	Page 15
Parking.....	Page 15
School Closings.....	Page 15
Nutrition and Meals.....	Page 16
Birthday Celebrations.....	Page 16
Handwashing.....	Page 16
Toileting and Toilet Learning.....	Page 17
Health and Safety.....	Page 21
Emergency Response Plan.....	Page 19
Illness Policy.....	Page 22
Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect.....	Page 24
Developmental Screening Tools.....	Page 25
Assessment: Teaching Strategies Gold.....	Page 25
Guidance and Problem Solving/Developmental Practices.....	Page 25
Supporting Children with Diverse Needs.....	Page 26
Children’s Files.....	Page 27

Introduction

OZ Full Circle Preschool is the way Ohavi Zedek cares for and nurtures the youngest in our community. We offer high-quality, nurturing, holistic care from Birth to Pre-Kindergarten age in five classrooms. Our program centers on child-led learning and exploration, along with Jewish values of kindness, generosity, and community from the youngest ages. OZ's Full Circle Preschool is Jewish in content, character, and calendar, while also whole-heartedly welcoming interfaith, non-affiliated, and non-Jewish students and families. Inclusion, warmth, and kindness are the foundation of all we do.

Shared Beliefs and Values

- All children play an active role as citizens within their classrooms, schools and communities.
- All children are capable of constructing their own knowledge.
- All children have the right to learn and grow at their own pace.
- All children shall be celebrated for their individuality and what they bring to the community of learners.
- Diversity and differences are deeply valued strengths of a community.
- Family involvement is a key component in building a successful learning community.
- Challenge and risk-taking are integral to children's development and growth.
- Knowledge is not unidirectional. Knowledge is constructed by individuals and their continuous re-descriptions of the world.
- Our learning environments should reflect our values and foster creativity.
- Children should have opportunities to interact with the natural world so that they may develop an appreciation for the earth and all living things.

“Nothing without joy” - Loris Malaguzzi

Non-Discriminatory Enrollment:

The licensee shall not deny a child's entry into the program because of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, disability, gender or the parents' marital status or gender identification.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

At OZ Full Circle Preschool, we embrace a Reggio-Emilia inspired emergent curriculum. We respect the child's need to generate their own questions and aim to help children make sense of their experiences. Using the project-based approach, we encourage teachers, children, family, and other members of the community to collaborate in ongoing projects based on the children's interests. Children's work is deeply respected, and is used by educators and families to better understand children's development and thinking processes. Children are fully supported in their expressive and creative endeavors. Children are encouraged to reflect on their work and the work of others, and to lend words and meaning to their creative processes. We believe strongly in providing children with inviting spaces that encourage creativity and exploration. We believe that in order to provide children with opportunities for independent and collaborative learning, we must ask open-ended questions and provide children with the proper language and materials to further explore their innate curiosities. While the Reggio Emilia approach is specific to the region in Italy, we understand that our approach is uniquely based upon the values, needs, and resources of our Burlington community, and the Jewish teachings interwoven throughout our daily learning experiences.

Judaism

Judaism holds education as an extremely high value. Through the preschool, Ohavi Zedek provides a place for our youngest to form their identities at a synagogue, feeling safe, supported, loved, and nourished in the context of Judaism during their formative years. Our Jewish values of chesed (loving kindness), tikkun olam (healing the world), and kehilla (community) will all be woven into the curriculum, helping young children develop strong values and ethics from the very beginning.

Each Friday morning, we host a Shabbat Party with the children which includes Shabbat and Jewish holiday themed songs in both English and Hebrew. After interactive music and storytelling, the children are invited to enjoy a snack provided by Full Circle. Snack usually consists of challah, grape juice, and a fruit. Oftentimes, the children assist the Program Director and Curriculum Coordinator in preparing the snack in our Kosher kitchen.

Nature Connection

At OZ Full Circle Preschool, we believe children are born scientists and explorers with innate curiosities about the natural world around them. As children make sense of their surroundings, it is essential to help them understand the natural world and how they fit into it. We believe that offering inviting outdoor learning environments is an important way to support children on their quests to explore beauty, natural elements, life cycles, and open space. We strive every day to connect children to the outdoors by creating environments rich with natural materials, plant and tree life, and sensory opportunities to enhance learning, engagement, and active play while offering opportunities for scientific exploration and discovery.

Children's direct interactions with nature in modes like gardening, observing insects, smelling flowers, exploring flowing water, working with mud, watching the clouds, and building forts among trees and shrubbery all contribute to a connection with nature and place while encouraging nourishment, mindfulness, and respect for all living things. By providing children with these early experiences outside each day, OZ Full Circle Preschool helps instill an enthusiasm for nature that will positively impact the way children regard, respect, discover and explore the natural world while strengthening their abilities to take risks, develop more self-awareness, and foster a lifelong appreciation for the Earth.

We have several acres of woods behind our center where the children partake in ongoing nature walks, story walks, scavenger hunts, tree and wildlife identification, and open ended nature explorations. We work with the OZ community and families each year to enhance our outdoor play spaces and encourage children to develop a sense of ownership of our school's forest.

Learning Environments

The teachers at OZ's Full Circle Preschool regard the classroom environment as the "third teacher" in which children are encouraged to learn directly through cause and effect relationships with materials and their peers. We strive to create learning environments that meet the individual needs of each child with developmentally appropriate materials and intentional spaces for collaborative and independent play. We believe that the classroom space should grow and change in accordance with the children's interests and developmental needs to encourage optimal access and participation. Each classroom incorporates the use of loose parts, which encourages

children to engage in open-ended play as they experiment with multi-purpose materials and construct their own understanding of how objects work. Children are often invited to explore outdoors in search of found objects and loose parts from nature that they can implement into their classroom play. As teachers observe the children's interactions with the environment and materials, they develop a better understanding of each child's interests and ways of making sense of the world and people around them. Through these experiences, teachers alter the classroom space, add materials to enhance learning, and plan ways for the children to expand upon their interests within the community through field trips and collaborative work with other classrooms.

At Full Circle, we have five classrooms which include: Infant Room (ages 2 months-1 year), Young Toddler Room (ages 1-2), Older Toddler Room (ages 2-3), and our 2 Preschool Mixed Age Rooms (ages 3-5 years). Each space is designed with intentionality and thoughtfulness in meeting the needs of the specific age group. All classrooms maintain a balance in child-directed and teacher-directed play, as we believe strongly in supporting and challenging children's needs. In all classrooms, children are offered choices and respected as the architects of their day. The teachers work collaboratively with the children on problem solving, self-regulating, and making safe decisions while encouraging them to take risks in their play and self-expression. Classroom dynamics may vary each year depending upon the demands of the community.

Infant Room

In the infant room, children are regarded as eager learners ready to learn and explore through their senses. Learning is supported through positive language, eye contact, responsive materials, and daily sensory experiences. The teachers in this room place a great deal of emphasis on nurturing strong relationships built upon trust with each child. The daily curriculum is based on each child's individual developmental needs enriched with positive interactions, responsiveness, and respect. The infant classroom environment provides open space for infants that encourages and challenges their social, motoric, and cognitive growth. Teachers provide the children in this room with materials and activities that support cause and effect relationships as infants develop a sense of how objects work. While teachers are responsive to each child, self-soothing and independent explorations are also supported through positive guidance and child-led play experiences and interactions.

Toddler Rooms

In the toddler room, guiding practices are focused on each child's development of self-awareness and identity. At this stage, children develop social growth in which problem solving practices become an important part of their daily experiences. As children develop stronger language skills, they are encouraged to use their words to express and label their emotions, but we understand that toddlers are still emerging in their abilities to understand and empathize with the emotions of others. Teachers employ positive guidance methods to set reasonable expectations for the children in this room. It is communicated when an action or behavior is not acceptable, but teachers will always offer a solution, explain the feelings of all individuals in the scenario, and provide children with opportunities to solve problems with the tools presented to them through these guidance practices.

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Rooms

In the preschool and pre-kindergarten rooms, independence, empathy, and representational works are highly regarded among the classroom's guiding practices. During this stage of development, children have a strong grasp on emotions and cognitive gains to represent how they perceive and fit into the world around them. The teachers in this room maintain developmentally appropriate expectations, instill trust in the children's individual decision making, and provide opportunities for the children to explore new materials, ideas, activities, and roles. In this classroom, children are encouraged and trusted to seek guidance within themselves and peers when finding solutions and collaborating. Collectively, the two classrooms work together in practicing prosocial behaviors including helping, sharing, giving, turn taking, and communicating effectively. These interactions promote socialization and assist the children in developing positive partnerships throughout their learning experiences. In this room, children work more closely on literacy, writing, reading, and early math skills. As children near the end of their preschool years, the teachers help prepare both parents and children for the transition into Kindergarten.

Classroom Daily Schedule

While our classroom needs and schedules can have slight variance to accommodate our child-led, Project Based Approach, as well as differences for developmentally appropriate care in each room, our daily schedule framework is as follows:

8:30-9:30 AM: Receive the children into our care, open play
9:30-10:00 AM: Handwashing & Snack
10:00-10:30 AM: Circle time/whole group
10:30 AM-11:00 AM: Project

11:00-12:00 PM: Gross Motor Play
 12:00-12:45 PM: Handwashing & Lunch
 12:45- 2:00 PM: Rest time
 2:00-3:30 PM: Open Play/ Projects/ Programming
 3:30- 4:30 PM: Gross Motor Play/Outdoor Exploration

Staff

The director is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the preschool program. The director helps the organization clarify and affirm values, set goals, articulate a vision, and plans and implements policy and courses of action to achieve the collective preschool vision. Managerial functions include, but are not limited to, pedagogical support, professional development, collaborative supervision, organizational development and systems, record keeping, fundraising, child enrollment, staff hiring, human resources, community outreach and advocacy.

The teaching staff fulfills 15+ hours of professional development a year, which includes maintaining updated Infant, Child and Adult CPR and First Aid certifications.

Full Circle Preschool adheres to the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations for teacher and child ratios in each classroom:

Children’s Ages	Staff: Child	Maximum in Group
6 weeks-23 months:	1:4	8
24 months-35 months	1:5	10
3 years-5 years	1:10	20

We strive to keep the group sizes as small as possible to accommodate individualized learning in calm, stimulating classroom environments that provide children with the space and freedom to express themselves while respecting the important work they do each day. The floating assistant provides daily support for staff and children in each classroom as needed.

Communication

We practice open communication among staff, administration, and families, as we foster an inclusive learning community committed to developing strong partnerships. Parents should communicate directly with classroom teachers, and we encourage ongoing open

dialogue. You can schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher or director at any time. Teachers implement the use of Brightwheel, a communication app that provides parents with individual daily updates and photos of children's learning experiences. If parents choose to not use this form of parent- teacher communication, they may request a written log of daily activities available to read during pick up. Teachers may also communicate with parents through email, Brightwheel message, and text when necessary (if teacher and parent approves text message as a communication form), but we believe that in-person communication is the most effective when speaking about children's development and building stronger relationships.

Respectfully, please do not contact any Full Circle staff via text message or phone call after Full Circle hours, or on the weekends unless it is an emergency. Otherwise, email and Brightwheel communication is encouraged, and teachers will respond during the next business day.

If parents or teachers have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the program, they are welcome to email, call, or schedule an appointment with Alexandria Skoog, the Full Circle Preschool Program Director.

Outings and Community Involvement

We encourage partnerships through community outreach with local organizations in our area. We strive to connect the wider community to the interests and learning experiences of each child in our care through frequent outings, field trips, and occasional educational visits from members outside of our teaching community. We take full advantage of the Burlington community with frequent morning walks and bus rides to various parts of UVM and the downtown Burlington area. These experiences support children in making sense of the world around them while developing a deeper respect for their peers, surroundings, and nature.

We encourage children to dress in comfortable walking shoes and clothing suitable for daily adventures and the messes that come along with experimental art and nature play. Teachers follow Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations to ensure the safety of each child. On outings, teachers bring backpacks that include each child's permission slip with emergency contact information, a First Aid kit, medication and medication form (if required), extra clothing, and diapers and wipes, if necessary. When crossing the street, teachers ensure that all children are holding hands while using crosswalks and practicing mindfulness and safety. Frequent destinations include Pomeroy Park, Battery Park, UVM Green, UVM Marsh Life Science Hall, UVM Greenhouse, Centennial Woods, Burlington Fire Stations, the Waterfront, and ECHO. When spending time in

areas that are not fenced in, teachers practice good judgment in regards to the children's safety while maintaining a safe proximity to all children. Parents are always welcome to join classes on community outings and field trips.

Family Involvement

We believe that families are the heart of our program, and we strive to celebrate the diverse voices, ideas, and culture that each family brings to our community. Our philosophy supports the idea that parents are a child's first teacher, which places great emphasis on the partnership between parents and caregivers. We support these partnerships through daily communication, frequent community events, and two annual parent teacher conferences. Formal conferences give parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss each child's development, express any concerns, and strategize ways to ensure that the home and school environments provide consistency for each child. Preschool events and parent meetings allow families to connect with other members of the community, share ideas and experiences, discuss any policy changes, and view monthly documentation panels in each classroom to get a closer look at the children's learning experiences.

Parents are encouraged to visit or volunteer at our school any time. We believe strongly in creating a family presence throughout our learning environments as we all work collectively to raise the children in our care. We welcome parents to participate in our in-service days, but we feel that rather than assigning parents tasks, we want parents to consider what they would like to share with the community. This may include coming in for a story hour, playing music, gardening, engaging in hands-on projects with the children, helping with Shabbat snacks, joining us on outings, or any other way you would like to share yourselves with our learning community. As Amelia Gembetti of Reggio Emilia stated, "Our job is too difficult and too beautiful to do alone."

Confidentiality

Full Circle staff sign confidentiality agreements at the start of each school year honoring the privacy of information shared by families. As a result, we will not share information regarding the behaviors, home life, or concerns of any other child in the program.

Enrollment

Enrollment is dependent upon teacher child ratios and family needs, which means that it may vary each year. Priority enrollment is given to siblings of families already enrolled in

our program, but we are whole-heartedly welcoming of interfaith, non-affiliated, and non-Jewish students and families. Inclusion, warmth, and kindness are the foundation of all we do.

Our program does not offer half days or one day a week scheduling models, as it is important for children to have continuity of care that is consistent. We offer 2-5 days of care dependent upon teacher: child ratios and find that children are best supported when they are fully immersed in our program.

We accept new students for the Fall of each year, if space is available. Because we are a year-round program, we require full year contracts for enrollment, which includes the summer months. We welcome applications throughout the year if you wish to have your child put on our waiting list. We will accept a new child into the program if a space opens up even if it does not fall within our usual enrollment period. This may occur if there is a shift in ratios, or a change in a child's schedule. We will continue giving priority enrollment to siblings of currently enrolled children.

Children must be at least 6 weeks old in order to be left in our care. If your child's fifth birthday falls after the September 1 Kindergarten cut-off date, we are more than happy to offer space for another year of Pre-Kindergarten while supporting your child's development and focusing on school readiness for a smooth transition into Kindergarten.

Your child is guaranteed enrollment throughout all of their years of preschool at Full Circle for the schedule they started out with in our program, However, **adding more days or switching scheduling is dependent upon the enrollment patterns.** The program director will work with you to best meet your family's scheduling needs, but additional days cannot be guaranteed. If you would like to formally request more days for your child, you may email the program director, Alexandria Skoog at fullcircle@ohavizedek.org and she will add your child to the waitlist for additional days. Before accepting new children, this waitlist will be considered to best meet the needs of children currently enrolled.

FULL CIRCLE IS A SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT. Smoking on the premise is not allowed and will result in termination of your contract.

Withdrawal

If you are withdrawing your child from the program, we ask that you please provide the director with a written notice at least 4 weeks (1 month) in advance of your planned program end date. We require that you pay your child's tuition during these 4 weeks even if your child does not attend school. We also ask that you provide an explanation for your decision so that we can better meet the needs of our community.

Termination of Enrollment

Childcare is not a one size fits all, there are instances where we feel we cannot adequately serve members of our community based on staffing or the needs of the child outweigh our resources. When a consistent disruptive behavior occurs, families will be approached first by teachers, then administration to create a plan of action to support the child in remaining in our care. Should the needs of the child outweigh the resources we have available as a staff, we may dismiss the child in the best interest of the student and/or the classroom environment.

Other instances where dismissal would become necessary following mediation/meetings between administrators and families:

1. Parents and guardians of the child allow their account to become delinquent (30 days past due).
2. Failure of the parents or guardians to honor the obligations listed in this handbook or in any rules, regulations, or manuals provided by the preschool.
3. The preschool in its sole discretion determines that it is unable to meet the needs of the child.
4. In an attempt to maintain a culture of mutual respect between administration, teachers, students and families, we retain the right to terminate enrollment if one demonstrates disrespectful behavior towards any staff member or administration. Verbal or physical abuse of any kind is immediate grounds for dismissal from our program. Verbal abuse is characterized by utilizing derogatory language, insults, or any other language used in an attempt to denounce harm to an individual in a hostile manner. Use of racist or homophobic language on our site is grounds for immediate dismissal. Rainbow Factory maintains a zero tolerance policy for hate speech. Full Circle Preschool emphasizes inclusionary practices that nurture the growth of all individuals employed and receiving instruction at our school.
5. Chronically bringing an infectious ill child to our site. The teachers, students, families and staff of Full Circle Preschool have the right to access their careers/education in a healthy environment.
6. The preschool year has ended, concluding their contract.

Tuition and Payments

Tuition can be paid in full at the beginning of each month, or in two equal installments at the beginning and middle of the month (the 1st and the 15th). To streamline and simplify the billing process, we request an ACH fund transfer directly from your bank account. This means we do not have to bill you, and you do not have to write checks regularly. We use a system called Shulcloud, which allows you to create a login, input your personal contact information, and choose a form of payment. You may pay for tuition via credit card, but please note that a 2.9% credit card fee applies each month. To avoid credit card fees, we encourage you to pay via echeck directly linked to your bank account.

Upon enrollment into our program, you will receive an email from Shulcloud prompting you to create a login. When you are signed in to your Shulcloud account, you will need to go to payment methods and either enter your credit card information, or your bank account information.

When you enter your bank account information, you must authenticate the account information either by logging into your bank account via PLAID or selecting the MICRO deposit option. The MICRO deposit option means that the gateway will send two small deposits to the bank account. Once they appear in the bank account, you will need to login to ShulCloud and enter the Micro deposits in the Bank account information previously added. Once you do that, the account can be used for payments. Please note that when doing this, you do not need to make any payments, as these will be set automatically for you each month. If you would like to change your form of payment, you must notify the program director, Alexandria Skoog, fullcircle@ohavizedek.org. Please note that you cannot delete a payment method if it is set up with automatic payments until you have input a new payment method and communicated the desire to make this change with the program director.

Please note that tuition is subject to increase each year in order to align with increases in the cost of providing care and education. Tuition includes: materials and Shabbat snack. It also includes human resources costs associated with recruiting and retaining our early education professionals including adequate salary, health care, and retirement.

Universal Pre-K Funding/Act 166

Full Circle Preschool is a prequalified Pre-Kindergarten education program. If your child is 3, 4, or 5 on or before September 1, you are eligible for funding support under Act 166. This includes when your child is 5 years of age and you wish to defer your child entering Kindergarten.

Act 166 pays the statewide rate for 10 hours per week for 35 weeks annually. Each year, you will need to register your child through your school district. The funds will be administered to Full Circle Preschool and will be deducted from your child's yearly tuition.

Your school district is dependent upon your residency, and you will need the following materials to register your child:

- child's birth certificate
- registration forms
- residency documents

The program director will notify you about the process for registering your child each year.

Hours and Calendar

OZ Full Circle Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM-4:30 PM.

School day hours are 8:30 AM- 4:30 PM. **We ask that you please pick your child up 5-10 minutes prior to the end of their day so that you have enough time to communicate with teachers. This also supports your child in having a smooth transition from school to home**

We require that children arrive at school no later than 9:30 AM so that they do not miss morning snack time, or other classroom activities. If your child will be arriving later than 9:30 due to a doctor's appointment or another engagement, please notify the director and classroom teacher so that they may plan accordingly. If your child arrives after 9:30, we ask that you be sure they have had a snack, and if they have not, we require that you sit with them for a snack at the table so that the class can continue on with their morning routines.

If your child will be absent for the day, please notify the director or your child's classroom teacher so that we may plan the day and evaluate staffing. Additionally,

please notify the director and classroom teacher in advance if your family plans on taking a vacation or an extended leave.

Late Pick Up Policy

We understand that unexpected things may occur in your schedule, but please take into consideration that your tardiness affects the teacher child ratios mandated by the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations. It is very important that you pick your child up on time. If you are running late to pick up your child, please notify your child's teacher so that we may adjust accordingly.

The first time that you are late, you will receive an email warning. After this initial time, you will be charged \$5 for every minute that you are late. The director will send you an email notifying you of the charges that will be pulled from your account prior to when they are pulled. Of course, if something unexpected happens and you check in with us about it, we will make exceptions, but we will not make exceptions for consistent tardiness. Thank you for respecting and honoring our hours of operation.

Parking

Our center has a large parking lot available for parents to use during the hours of drop off (8:30-9:30 AM) and pick up (4:30). Additional parking is available in the back of the building. Please do not leave your car in the parking lot all day unless you have made arrangements with Brett Smith, Director of Ohavi Zedek.

School Closings

For weather-related school closings, please note that Full Circle Preschool will close if the Burlington School District **and/or** S. Burlington School District closes. For example, if Burlington School District has an early dismissal, but the S. Burlington School District is closed, Full Circle will close. The director will always send an email the night before or the morning of with full details to confirm, along with a direct message on Brightwheel. You may find a list of delays and closings [here](#). As we serve a population that primarily commutes to school, we determined it is best practice to utilize two school districts to determine our best approach to weather related closures and will defer to the most cautious approach.

Nutrition and Meals

The kitchen at OZ's Full Circle Preschool is Kosher. Children will eat meals in their classrooms or together in the Social Hall, but meals will never be eaten in the kitchen. Parents must provide children's meals each day with a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack.

***Meat is not allowed in your child's lunch in observance of kashrut (Kosher guidelines).**

*In addition to meat, the following food is not permitted:

- **PEANUTS**
- **PISTACHIOS**

These dietary restrictions are in place to protect our students with life-threatening food allergies.

***Please note that our food policy is subject to change depending on the dietary restrictions of the children each year.**

We are unable to heat up your child's lunch, so please plan accordingly. You may send your child's hot lunch in a thermos that we will keep out of the refrigerator. It is very important that you send your child in with a full water bottle each day, but we require that you bring it home to be washed daily.

Each Friday morning, Full Circle provides a snack at our all-school Shabbat Party gathering. These snacks are guaranteed to be Kosher and free of any allergens.

Birthday Celebrations

We encourage classroom birthday celebrations and welcome you to bring in a birthday treat to share with your child's class. **Due to food allergies and sensitivities, we recommend that you bring fruit and whipped cream for the birthday celebration.** To ensure that the snack is Kosher, please do not cut up the fruit in your home, as we will cut it in our kitchen at school, if needed. Please notify your child's teacher prior to your child's birthday if you plan on sending in a birthday treat.

Handwashing

Handwashing is very important in reducing the spread of germs and maintaining a healthy community. Upon arrival each morning, children and parents must wash hands with soap and water. Throughout the day, teachers will practice handwashing with children at the following times:

- Upon arriving at the center
- After each diaper change
- After wiping or picking a nose, coming into contact with saliva or any other bodily fluid
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses like diarrhea, the flu, and conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Toileting and Toilet Learning Procedure

When toilet training children, staff will accompany children in the bathroom at all times. Staff will work with parents/families on determining when a child is ready to begin toilet training based on interest and bathroom habits. It is important that the toilet training process first begin in the home environment and continue in the school environment. Staff will ensure that the home toilet training practices are carried out in the school environment, and all practices will be carried out with a parent or guardian's consent. Parents will be updated regularly on a child's toilet training progress.

Children will never be forced to toilet train, and the staff employ positive guidance and encouragement on safe and sanitary toileting procedures. Children are supported in this development in accordance with their developmental abilities and readiness.

When your child seems ready to begin toilet learning, it is important that this begin in the home environment first. This typically becomes evident when a child shares when they have a soiled diaper, share that they are going in their diaper, or begin to ask to sit on the toilet consistently. Families are encouraged to check in with their child's teacher and the program director so that we can work together to make a plan that works best for your child. Once a child has had at least 3 days consistently at home wearing underpants with a handful of successful bathroom tries, we welcome the child to begin wearing underpants at school and ask that you send in a soiled clothes bag and extra clothing as we anticipate accidents throughout the learning process.

Safe Sleep

At Full Circle Preschool, we prioritize the health and safety of all children in our care. By recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we follow these safe sleep tips in our classrooms when applicable:

- Babies should always be placed on their back for sleep.
- Babies should sleep on a firm sleep surface that does not incline.
- Remove all toys, pillows, blankets, and bumpers from the crib.
- It's OK to swaddle a baby, but stop swaddling as soon as they start learning to roll.
- If the baby falls asleep in a car seat, stroller, swing, or infant carrier, move them as soon as you can.
- It's dangerous for babies to sleep on a couch, armchair or nursing pillow.
- Try giving your baby a pacifier at nap time and bedtime, after breastfeeding has been established.
- Keep the baby's bassinet or crib in your bedroom for at least the first 6 months.
- Reach out to your child's doctor or your home visiting nurse if sleep is a problem for your family

For the full list of recommendations, see the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) safe sleep policy.

Health Forms and Immunizations

Prior to admission, each child shall have all immunizations required for their age. A copy of your child's immunization records will be kept on file at the school. **You are required to provide Alexandria Skoog, Preschool Director, with an updated copy of your child's immunizations record each time they receive a new immunization.** A record of a healthy child visit must be in your child's file. Immunizations are required for enrollment, with only medical exemptions allowed. Parents should inform the Director of any changes in their child's health status.

Administering Medications

Medications may only be given to your child when accompanied by a signed medication form with specific directions for administration. In accordance with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations, **all medications must be in original containers with the label.**

If your child begins a medication that has never been taken before, we ask that you wait 24 hours before sending them into school so that you may observe any side effects that may occur. When you bring in medication, the proper forms will be available in each classroom.

While Insect repellent, sunscreen and non-prescription diaper ointment are not considered medications, written parental permission is required prior to the application of insect repellent, sunscreen and non-prescription diaper ointment.

Emergency and Non-Emergency Medical Treatment

If your child experiences a non-serious injury, the authorized pickup person will be presented with an accident report describing the injury, how it happened, and what measures were taken. In the event that a child requires further medical attention, a staff member will contact you by phone immediately. Because of this, it is very important that emergency contact information and a daytime telephone number are provided and updated when necessary.

Full Circle Preschool Emergency Response Plan

I. Building Access

During All Hours:

- A. All exterior doors shall remain locked. Fob access from either the North Entrance or the Kitchen Hallway door. Visitors can gain entry during business hours by using the doorbell at the North Entrance.

The fob system is designed to allow general membership entry during regular business hours and shabbat hours. Other time entries include Preschool, Hebrew School, and Israeli dance, for example. Entry cannot be made at off hours as to avoid setting off the alarm system.

III. Fire Emergency

- A. Students will evacuate to the nearest external door to their classrooms, or if unable to safely evacuate the front door, they will evacuate through our egress windows.
- B. After evacuation, students and staff will meet at Fern Hill (214 N Prospect St) where families will be contacted by individual teachers and administrators in a timely manner following a head count of students and assessment of injuries.
- C. Should the fire spread to Fern Hill, we will meet at Pomeroy Park. (343 North Street, Burlington)
- D. Should the director be incapacitated, the assistant director will handle protocol, followed by Caley Gervais (Infant Teacher). Local authorities including but not limited to Burlington Police and Fire Departments will be notified of emergency.
- E. Any students unable to walk, or with additional needs, will be transported via wagon to our safe locations for pickup.
- F. Students will be reunited with their families at above pickup spots.

IV. Flooding

- A. In the event of power loss due to flooding, Full Circle will issue an emergency closure due to inability to safely operate. Parents will be notified via Brightwheel, then called by individual teachers should a response not be received within 30 minutes. All students will be expected to be picked up within an hour of the emergency closure.
- B. Should Ohavi Zedek Synagogue flood, we will seek higher ground on the second floor of the building and contact parents via Brightwheel app and/or phone call.
- C. Should the director be incapacitated, the assistant director will handle protocol, followed by Caley Gervais (Infant Teacher). Local authorities including but not limited to Burlington Police and Fire Departments will be notified of emergency.
- D. Any students unable to walk, or with additional needs, will be transported via wagon to our safe locations for pickup.

V. Tornado/ Shelter In Place

- A. Should we require sheltering in place, our students and staff will do so in the basement of Ohavi Zedek until given the all clear by David Rome, head of security at Ohavi Zedek Synagogue, when the danger/weather event passes.
- B. Parents will be notified by individual teachers and administrators via Brightwheel app and phone calls that students are sheltering safely and will be notified when

Shelter in Place is lifted. Parents will be urged to refrain from picking children up during this time.

Micheal LaChance, the Emergency Planning Committee point of contact for Chittenden County, will be notified of our Emergency plans.

During all emergencies, both staff and Directors will have rosters of all students at Ohavi Zedek Full Circle Preschool and maintain headcounts in order to maintain oversight of children during these emergencies.

In the circumstance that an emergency situation occurs that will inhibit our ability to reconvene or reopen the center, the center director will notify families as soon as it is safe to do so. The program will work with emergency management and law enforcement to provide safe and up to date reunification instructions to families via phone calls or the Brightwheel app. If we have had to evacuate to a location not listed in our evacuation procedures, we will notify families as soon as it is safe to do so and disclose the new location at that time. If for some reason cell phone signal is unavailable, we will work with local law enforcement and emergency management to get in touch with families and notify them of our safe location to reunify them with their children.

Health and Safety

OZ Full Circle Preschool is required to follow the safety guidelines outlined by the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations. You may view these regulations [here](#) on pages [39-70](#).

To access the Child Development Division online, please visit: [Child Development Division | Department for Children and Families](#).

All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified to handle minor injuries as needed. When an incident occurs, parents are notified with a written incident report that they must sign upon reviewing. A copy of this report is then stored in the child's file. If your child is seriously injured or requires further medical attention, you will be called immediately.

Information about our lead testing procedures can be provided upon request. Our classrooms and outdoor spaces have been lead tested, and any appropriate remediation will occur when necessary.

General Illness Policy

Full Circle Preschool follows the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations and guidelines regarding the health and safety of children exhibiting signs and symptoms of illness. Due to state regulations and because children who don't feel well can have a very hard time in group settings, we require that a child be picked up within an hour of notification of any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- "Goop" around the eye that returns after being wiped away
- Unexplained rash
- Diarrhea (two or more episodes)
- Vomiting (one or more episodes)
- **Severe cold (Bad cough, constant runny nose, watery eyes, chest congestion).**
- Contagious diseases or infections such as: bronchitis, strep throat, red or German measles, chicken pox, mumps, bacterial meningitis, fifth disease, herpes virus, molluscum contagiosum, shingles, warts, cold sores, giardia, campylobacter, salmonella poisoning, polio, impetigo, diphtheria, hepatitis A, whooping cough (pertussis), scarlet fever, or roseola.
- Infestations such as lice, scabies, pinworms, or ringworm

The following illnesses require that your child be seen by a healthcare professional:

- "Goop" around the eye that returns after being wiped away
- Severe cold (Bad cough, constant runny nose, watery eyes, chest congestion)
- infestations such as scabies, pinworms, or ringworm
- Contagious diseases or infections (to be determined on an individual basis)

Before a child can return to Full Circle after any of the above, they must be eating well, sleeping well through the night and ready and able to participate in a full active day both indoors and outdoors.

AND all of the following that apply must be true:

- The child has medically improved, meaning free of any of the above symptoms, for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication during those 24 hours.
- If the child was suffering from a communicable disease, the child is no longer in the contagious stage of that disease.

- The child has been on antibiotics for more than 24 hours in cases of bacterial infections.
- The child has been treated for and is free of lice, scabies, pinworms or ringworm.

COVID-19 Illness Policy

Please note these protocols are subject to change

CHILDREN AND STAFF WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS:

Any student or staff member should stay home if they are not feeling well or are running a fever or have any of the symptoms associated with covid19.

[CDC Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

We require COVID testing for children who are exhibiting any symptoms consistent with COVID. Children may return to school if they test negative and have improving symptoms and no fever, but should retest in 48 hours if there are any persistent symptoms.

Everyone should retest for Covid in 48 hours if any persistent symptoms, per the CDC recommendations.

CHILDREN AND STAFF WHO ARE CLOSE CONTACTS OF COVID-19:

STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH COVID-19 INFECTIONS

Staff and Children who contract COVID-19 may return to school after **5 full days of isolation and must have:**

- ❖ no fever for at least 24 hours without needing fever reducing medication
- ❖ AND significantly improved symptoms.

*If symptoms have not subsided, children must remain home until their symptoms have improved.

Students returning from isolation prior to a negative COVID-19 test are asked to mask, Full Circle Preschool will provide said masks for students who fall under this category. However, our preference is that a student does not return before their infection clears due to the risks associated with this infection.

Child Care Consumer Line

The Vermont Child Care Consumer Line is a resource for families to voice concerns or ask questions regarding child care providers in Vermont. Their phone number is 1-800-649-2642.

Attendance, Signing In/Out, Accountability

At pick up and drop off, teachers are responsible for signing children in and out using our daily attendance logs. During school day hours (9:00-4:00), the sheets will be kept in each classroom. This system is used by staff members to ensure accurate student counts and use them as a reference in the event of an emergency for children's safety.

Please be sure that we have the accurate contact information on file in case we need to contact you if there is an emergency. If your child will be in the care of someone else, please notify your child's teacher so that we know who to contact immediately.

We are welcoming of all family members during drop off and pick up, but we ask that if you bring another child (i.e. a sibling), please be sure that this child is in your sight and care at all times while in the building

Authorized Pick Up/Release

The Full Circle staff will only release children to the individuals that have been authorized by the child's parents/guardians. When a new person has been added to this list, Full Circle staff will ask that they show a proof of identity before your child is released into their care.

Please add all approved pickups to your child's Brightwheel account. Here are the instructions: go to your child's Brightwheel feed, click profile in the top right corner, scroll down to contacts, click the plus sign to the right of contacts, select approved pickup, include the contact information for each approved pickup (name and phone number), then press save at the top right corner.

Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect

As childcare providers, Full Circle staff are mandated reporters and are obligated by the state of Vermont to report any suspected cases of abuse and neglect within 24 hours. This procedure entails calling 1-800-649-5285. For further information on this mandated procedure, you may visit

Developmental Screening Tools

At Full Circle Preschool, we use reliable screening tools, such as the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) to track children's development and social-emotional progress throughout their early years.

The ASQ-3 monitors children's development (from one month to 5.5 years) in 5 core areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. Oftentimes, we will perform an additional screener, which is the ASQ-SE2 (Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional).

ASQ screeners are available for children from the ages of one month to 5.5 years. All lead teachers at Full Circle Preschool are properly trained in the use of ASQ screener. Teachers are required to maintain up to date assessments of each child in their care. Lead teachers are encouraged to share children's most recent ASQ results with families twice a year during parent-teaching conferences. ASQ screening results are to be kept in each child's personal file, and will be available to parents upon request.

ASQ results are useful to teachers when implementing curriculum, as they may indicate or suggest the need for more play and learning opportunities within the 5 core knowledge areas.

Assessment: Teaching Strategies Gold:

As a Universal Pre-Kindergarten program, teachers in the Preschool and Pre-K classrooms (ages 3-5) use Teaching Strategies Gold, an ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten. Each child has their own profile where teachers capture, organize, and store notes, photos, videos, and digital samples of children's ongoing work. This assessment tool aligns with the Vermont Early Standards (VELS) Teachers use VELS in their planning. Please note that due to the use of TSG, teachers in the Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten rooms will not provide as many daily updates on Brightwheel.

Guidance and Problem Solving/Developmental Practices

At Full Circle Preschool, we use positive redirection when guiding children through problem solving. Our classroom environments are intentionally designed to promote positive interactions. When challenges arise we start with looking at how the child interacts with the environment and classroom peers. We understand that behaviors

often occur when a child's needs aren't being met. It is our mission to get to the root of these needs by encouraging children to communicate with their words while providing them with the proper language to do so. We often employ humor and lightheartedness as a way to help children manage their emotions. When children have developed language skills, we work with them on labeling emotions and finding peaceful ways to express those emotions through music, gross motor activities, and offer calm spaces for alone time. We do not believe in giving children time out, as this only acts as a temporary solution. Instead, we encourage children to talk through their emotions, communicate with peers and teachers, channel their energy into another activity, or take independent space in the classroom.

We believe strongly in supporting children's social and emotional development and follow developmentally appropriate expectations for behavior and communication. Our goal is to guide children in developing self regulation skills, communicating effectively, and finding solutions. Teachers are available to support children in solving-their problems offering-guidance as needed.

Staff are always willing to meet with families regarding positive approaches to challenging behaviors, but please keep in mind that we will keep the behavior of other children confidential.

If a child's behavior causes imminent harm, we will employ the use of coping strategies, outside agency support, and communication with all team members to support the child in the classroom. If these behaviors continue after such support is put in place, we may ask your child to leave with five days' notice as aligned with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations and Agency of Education suspension and expulsion regulations.

Supporting Children with Diverse Needs

Full Circle strives to have an inclusive environment that supports all of our students. While we see each child as an individual we also partner with early intervention and school districts to provide support above what is available in our general classroom curriculum.

As early educators we want to work together with your family and programs that support you/your child. We are open to having early intervention and essential early education providers within our space. We can help families in accessing screenings and evaluations when the family and Full Circle teams determine a need. With parent permission we are able to share completed screening and assessment results and strategies introduced in the classroom environment.

Student Files

The program director shall maintain a complete and up-to-date enrollment file on-site for each child enrolled.. A complete file shall contain, at minimum, the following information:

- A completed child's admission form signed and dated by the parent that includes the first date the child attended Full Circle and the days and hours attending
- The child's name, current home address, and current home telephone number
- Identification of child's home language
- The child's date of birth
- Name, address, and all applicable current telephone numbers for parents
- Name, address, and all applicable current telephone numbers for at least two (2) other people designated by the parents as emergency contacts
- Names for all persons authorized to pick the child up from Full Circle Preschool
- Record of an annual physical and health history as required in the rule 5.1.2 of these regulations that includes the name and telephone number of the child's primary health care and dental care providers (if the child has a dental care provider)
- A description of any special medical, developmental, emotional, or educational needs of the child including allergies, existing illnesses or injuries, previous serious illnesses or injuries and any prescribed medication including those for emergency situations
- Written authorization from the parent for Full Circle Preschool to be able to obtain emergency medical care and transportation
- Child's immunization record or Vermont Department of Health approved exemption document as required in the rules in section 5.1.3 of these regulations.
- Written permission from parents for Full Circle Preschool to transport the child, if transportation is provided, as required in the rule 5.10.6.6.1 of the regulations.
- Written permission from parents for the child to participate in swimming activities, if swimming activities are a part of the program, as required in the rule 5.10.5.1 of Vermont Childcare regulations
- If applicable, a copy of court orders on custody and visitation arrangements as required in the rule 3.6.4 of these regulations

- If applicable, any obvious injuries discovered and documented on daily health check as required in the rule 5.3.2 of these regulations.

Thank you!

If you have any further questions about our program, or would like to schedule a tour, please email Alexandria Skoog at fullcircle@ohavizedek.org. We look forward to welcoming you to our learning community!