



**RABBI JACOB JOSEPH GIRLS SCHOOL
YESHIVA MERKAZ HATORAH
PARENT HANDBOOK**

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YESHIVA MERKAZ HATORAH**

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FOREWORD

This handbook has been prepared to familiarize parents the routines, procedures, and rules of our school. The information helps answer many of the most frequently asked questions that parents have.

No guide, however comprehensive, can take the place of direct personal contact between parents and the school. We encourage such frequent contact. If ever you have a question for a teacher or administrator, please call the Girl's School office and leave a substantive message.

It is our hope that parents will feel free to communicate with their daughter's teachers and with the school administration and that parents take an active role in the education of each girl. With the help of *Hashem*, our cooperative efforts will bear fruit. May we enjoy a *nachas* - filled, productive, and successful year.

Mrs. Esther Akerman

Mrs. Esther Akerman

Menahelas

DAILY SCHEDULE

LIMUDEI KODESH SCHEDULE- GRADES 1 – 2

8:30 -10:25	Line up, <i>Davening</i> & Sessions
10:25 -10:45	Recess
10:45 -11:30	Sessions
11:30 -12:00	Lunch
12:00- 12:15	Bentching & clean-up

LIMUDEI KODESH SCHEDULE - GRADES 3-4

8:30 -10:25	Line up, <i>Davening</i> & Sessions
10:25- 10:45	Recess
10:45 - 11:45	Sessions
11:45- 12:15	Lunch

LIMUDEI KODESH SCHEDULE - GRADES 5 – 8

8:30 -10:40	Line up, <i>Davening</i> & Sessions
10:40 -10:55	Recess
10:55 -12:00	Sessions
12:00 -12:25	Lunch

SECULAR STUDIES SCHEDULE - GRADES 1 - 4

12:15	Sessions begin
2:15 - 2:35	Recess Grades 1 – 4
3:45	Dismissal Grades 1 – 4

SECULAR STUDIES SCHEDULE GRADES 5 – 8

12:25– 1:10	First Period
1:15 – 2:00	Second period
2:00 – 2:20	Recess
2:20-3:10	Third Period
3:15 – 4:05	Fourth period
4:05-4:15	Pack Up and Dismissal

FRIDAY SCHEDULE

(ALTERNATE LIMUDEI KODESH & SECULAR STUDIES)

8:30	Line up, <i>Davening</i> & Sessions
11:30 – 11:50	Lunch
1:00	Dismissal Grades 1-8



DAILY DISMISSAL

No child will be permitted to leave school early unless:

- A Parent sends a note authorizing the child's early release to a designated driver which is timely submitted to the Girls School Office.
- The authorized adult (including parents and faculty) picking up a child from school early must sign the child out at the Girls School Office.

APPEARANCE AND ATTIRE

Proper dress plays a very important role in the dignity and atmosphere of the *Yeshiva*. Students should reflect *Torah* standards in their dress and appearance.

VISITORS

All who enter the *Yeshiva* buildings or the school yard are asked to come dressed modestly in clothing which displays proper reverence for a "*M'kom Torah*."

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Girls must come to school in school uniform only. Solid navy blue skirts **MUST** cover the knee. Long-sleeved button down Oxford Blouses must be solid: white, or pale blue. Tee-shirts may not be worn. 3 Button collared $\frac{3}{4}$ length/long sleeve "Polos" that are solid; white, or pale blue may be worn in grades 1-3 only.

While we do not require or endorse any particular manufacturer or retailer, the school uniform can be purchased at Fraylich's uniform store in Brooklyn. The only sweatshirts allowed is the official school sweatshirt purchased through Fraylich's.

Students in grade 7 & 8 **MUST** wear knee socks. Although knee socks would be preferable in grades 1 – 6 as well, shorter socks may be worn in those grades provided the ankles are covered at all times. Leggings and socks below the ankle are not permitted in school. Backless shoes are not permitted in school. Nail polish and makeup are not permitted in school. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.

Rosh Chodesh

On *Rosh Chodesh* girls will be allowed to wear non-uniform shirts with uniform skirts. Neck openings should not reveal the shoulder or extend below the collar bone. They must be befitting a *Bas Yisroel* and the special day of *Rosh Chodesh* that was given especially in her honor.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

Consistent attendance at school is a fundamental prerequisite to significant achievement. Cooperation between the home and school is essential. Parents should not schedule vacations, doctors' appointments, and other out of school activities when school is in session.

If a child is absent from school for whatever reason, she must bring a note from the parents explaining the necessity of the absence. Teachers will request a note from any child returning from an absence.

When parents are aware in advance that a student will be absent from school, the teachers should be contacted so that assigned school work can be completed during the absence.

COMMUNICATION



In order to facilitate efficient school administration and ensure that parents are aware and involved in every phase of their daughters' education, continuous parent-school communication is essential.

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Parents should feel welcome to initiate communication with their daughter's teachers in addressing any concerns. The best method is to call or contact the Girls School office and leave a substantive message. The teachers should respond reasonably soon thereafter. If further discussion is needed, parents may contact the principal by again calling or contacting the Girls School Office and leaving a substantive message.

Shortly after the start of school, there will be a "Back-to-School Night." The principal will address the parent body and discuss objectives for the school year. Parents will be invited to meet with their daughters' teachers and become better informed as to the scope and sequence of the curriculum. This meeting is not designed to afford the opportunity to discuss an individual student

"Parent/Teacher Conferences," held later in the semester, provide the opportunity to discuss an individual student's progress. Two such conference nights are scheduled during the school year. If special needs or problems arise with an individual student, teachers may contact the parents in a timely manner.

"Report Cards" will be sent to parents three times a year. Ratings on the report card are on an objective basis and show the relationship between the student's achievement and the school's regular level demand at a particular point. The "comments" section may reflect the subjective achievements of the individual student. Parents should study these reports carefully to determine how their child is progressing academically and behaviorally.

"Referrals" to the Committee on Special Education" are sometimes required to obtain requisite evaluations and services for students demonstrating particular needs. In order to maximize a child's academic, social, psychological and/or educational development, such evaluations may be required. If in our educational opinion the need becomes apparent we will endeavor to notify the family and write a referral to the New York City Committee on Special Education.

Parents should also **check each girl's book bag daily**. Quite often important information is sent in a written note via the book bag. Please check.

CALENDAR

The official one page school calendar should be retained and referred to the Girls School Office prior to



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calendar, which is generally distributed by the commencement of the academic year regularly.

day schedule as well as “No Transportation

No Bus Transportation indicates:

Grades 1- 8 begin at 8:30 A.M.
Dismissal for grades 1- 8 is at 3:45 P.M.

The Parents’ Association also generally produces a calendar as a fundraiser. We encourage participation and refer parents to the section of this handbook regarding the Parents’ Association.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL/TEXT ALERT SYSTEM

When inclement weather necessitates the closing of local schools, RJJ Girls School will also close. In the event we cancel school and there is public school we will endeavor to notify parents via text alert. We are attaching instructions for signing up with the text alert system

While we hope for the best, there are also times when Emergency circumstances call for a school closure during the course of a school day. Please be certain to fill out, submit and maintain an updated “Emergency Form” in the Girls School Office so that we can contact you in the event of early dismissal/emergency.



For the past few years we have been using the Remind Text Alert System to notify parents of weather related and other notifications. They have changed their system so we are required to make some changes. Below is instructions how to sign up. Please only sign up for the groups that pertain to you and your children, as space is limited in each group.

All parents should sign up to the parent body text alert system using these instructions:

Parents whose last name begin with A-F send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpp1

Parents whose last name begin with G-L send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpp2

Parents whose last name begin with M-R send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpp3

Parents whose last name begin with S-Z send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpp4

For the Girls School Text Alerts:

Parents whose last name begin with A-L send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjgirls1

Parents whose last name begin with M-Z send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjgirls2

For the Preschool Text Alerts:

Parents whose last name begin with A-L send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpre1

Parents whose last name begin with M-Z send a text to the number 81010 the body of the text should say @rjpre2

If you have any questions please call the business office for assistance.

DISCIPLINE AND MISBEHAVIOR

Rules and regulations are established in any institution to indicate the limits of acceptable social behavior. As a rule, student behavior is taught, and reinforced through positive reinforcement techniques. The following are our expectations for all students in school.

The teacher has the right to expect that:

- Each student will work according to the best of her abilities
- Each student will follow directions and complete work on time
- Each student will be respectful and appropriately deferential to all teachers
- Each student will follow all school rules and regulations

A student can expect that:

- Each teacher will be encouraging, tolerant and understanding; yet, firm and persistent.
- Each teacher may exhibit a sense of humor but will not tolerate disrespect.

When a student misbehaves she will be appropriately disciplined in a manner corresponding to her misdemeanor. Parents will be notified of persistent or severe misbehavior by a “**Conduct Referral Notice.**” Flagrantly disrespectful or dangerous misbehavior or the accumulation of three “**Conduct Referral Notices**” within one academic year will result in suspension from school.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, iPads, CD players, electronic games, digital cameras, Apple i watches, etc. are not permitted in school. They will be confiscated. We appreciate parental support on this very important matter.



FIELD TRIPS

To enhance our students' understanding of academic subjects and to promote learning through experience, the school will sponsor field trips to various places of interest. General Trip Consent forms are available from the Girls School Office or online at our school website and should be completed and submitted to the Girls School Office before the school year starts.

Before any projected trip, a notice is generally sent home with students (please check the back packs daily). Parents should fill out the trip specific consent form. We appreciate your cooperation in this regard. No child will be permitted to accompany her class on a trip without at least one signed consent form.

Occasionally parents may be asked to facilitate a trip by driving a group of children. Such parent driver volunteers must fill out a "designated driver form" and submit it to the Girls School Office. Only parents who have filled out and submitted such a form with the Girls School Office will be permitted to transport children.



EMERGENCY

DRILLS

We are in strict compliance with all regulations for fire and lockdown drills as stipulated by the New York City State. There is an emergency exit route posted in each room of the building. Fire and lockdown drills must be taken seriously and strict adherence to school rules is enforced.



FIRST AID/EMERGENCY AID

First aid is limited to cleaning and bandaging surface wounds. In case of emergency we will endeavor to notify parents and follow the designated instructions pursuant to the "Emergency Card" on file in the Girls School Office. Please be certain to fill out, submit, and maintain an updated "Emergency Card" in the Girls School Office.

GROUNDS

The school grounds are private property and bounded by a gate and fence. Leaving these premises during school hours without written permission is a serious infraction for which a student will be suspended from school.

HEALTH POLICY AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Each student should have a thorough physical examination annually. The law requires that every child who enters school must be immunized. Certification of vaccinations must be filled out, and submitted to the Girls School Office before the start of school.

If a student has a special medical condition or health problem, parents must advise the school of any procedures and/or accommodations that may be necessary. During the

school year, speech, hearing and vision screening are provided for selected groups of students. These screenings do not preclude the need for a thorough examination when warranted. It is recommended that a thorough dental examination be made and any corrective work be done **before beginning of the school year**.

In the event that appointments are needed during the academic year, Parents are urged to arrange for them to take place before or after school hours. **DAILY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY IS IMPORTANT TO FOSTER VALUES AND PROMOTE SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION!**

HOMework



Homework is an imperative and integral medium through which students attain academic objectives. The need for home assignments varies and homework policies are decided in accordance with the specific needs of each age group. Homework need not be assigned daily and teachers may limit assignments so that no child will have to spend all night studying.

Children should assume the primary responsibility for completing their homework. Parents are requested to provide an atmosphere conducive to studying and to assist their child in planning homework time properly. **Homework time should be free of interruptions and undue distractions.** A dedicated pad for students to record and keep track of their homework assignments is recommended for students in grades 3 – 8.

If a child sometimes experiences difficulty, guide her but refrain from doing the assignment for her. If she often seems perplexed, the teacher should be informed.

Students are responsible for work that is assigned even if they are absent. When parents are aware in advance that a student will be absent from school, the teachers should be contacted so that assigned school work can be completed during the absence.

Parents may be notified if a student displays a pattern of non-compliance with homework completion and/or home study expectations.

ILLNESS

Inevitably over the course of a school year students get sick. We ask for cooperation in keeping children at home when there are any signs of illness. We must insist that parents not send any child back to school after an illness until the child is without fever for 24 hours. In the event the child has a contagious disease (e.g. Strep Throat etc.) we must insist that parents not send the child back to school until they have been treated with appropriate medication (e.g. Antibiotics etc.) for 24 hours. Any contagious disease **MUST** be reported to the Girls School Office.

The school will contact parents and send home any child who becomes sick during school hours. Parents must leave current business and personal numbers with the Girls School Office to enable us to contact them expeditiously. When notified that a child is unwell, parents are expected to pick her up or to make alternate arrangements for her to leave school immediately.

The office staff is not permitted to dispense any medication without signed parental consent on the "Emergency Medical Form." Please be sure to obtain, fill out, and submit such a form to the Girls School Office.

Prescription medications sent to school must be kept in a container that is labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage and time for dispensing. There is a refrigerator available in the office for medication.

Head lice are a medically significant problem that may be found in even the cleanest of homes. Hair will be checked periodically in school and should be checked at home as well. If lice or nits are found, please notify the school office so that other children in the same class may be examined. A child with lice in any form will not be admitted to school until all nits are removed.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) is common and highly contagious. A child with conjunctivitis should be kept home even if she is already on antibiotics until there is no redness or discharge.

LATENESS

The tardy student develops poor habits, disturbs an entire class and misses part of her daily work. A student who arrives late to school may not go directly to her classroom; she must come first to the office for an admittance slip. A record of student lateness is kept in the office.

Remember, maintaining punctuality necessitates full parental cooperation.

LOST AND FOUND



Items including clothing, book bags, etc. should be labeled with student's family name. Items that are not labeled will be brought to a designated "Lost & Found" area in the Girls School Office. If they are not claimed by the end of the school year, they will be discarded.

MESSAGES

Students are not permitted to use the office telephone without the approval of the administration.

MONIES BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Any monies sent to school (for example to pay for a planned school trip etc.) should be placed in an envelope - clearly marked with the student's name, the amount, and the designated purpose – and given immediately upon arrival to the Girls School Office, teacher or an administrator.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parents' Association sponsors activities for students throughout the school year, such as Yom Tov entertainment, *Melaveh Malkeh* and the Mother/Daughter Breakfast. They also provide enrichment materials, subsidies for class trips, sports equipment, and more. These special programs add excitement and benefit the children. All parents are urged to show support, not only to the annual membership drive, but by becoming involved and volunteering assistance for Parents' Association projects.

PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS, SNACKS, NUT FREE SCHOOL



In school, Birthday parties for girls in first or second grade must be arranged in advance by consulting with the appropriate teacher. We highly recommend **PARVE** snacks only! Any Dairy must be *Cholov Yisroel*. All food must bear OU, OK, Kof K, Star K or Vaad Hakashrus of Staten Island endorsement. (Please Note: The letter K is not considered a kashrus symbol without additional clarification from a reliable rabbinical authority.) Home prepared food of any kind may not be brought to school for distribution.

Since a number of students are allergic to peanuts and nut products, we instituted a strict “**Nut-Free Policy**” so that our school is a safe place for these girls. Parents are urged not to send any food to school for parties or individual snack that contains nuts or traces of nuts. Teachers are instructed to confiscate any snack with nuts. Parents are advised not to send any food with nuts on the bus as well. Please read labels before sending any food into school. We regret any inconvenience this may cause however we hope you will understand the *Sakanos Nefoshos* involved. Strict compliance with this rule may avert a possible tragic occurrence. Any such inconvenient is well worth the effort if we save even one life.

For out of school parties, based on our experiences and the frequent requests of parents, we recommend that invitations should include information regarding the menu to be served (e.g milchig vs. fleishig, pizza from _____, ice cream from _____, franks from _____, etc.)

We strongly urge that in the spirit of *Ahavas Yisroel*, individual students not be excluded from birthday guest lists when most of the students are invited to a party. If a small private home party has been planned, invitations should be mailed. Only when the entire class is invited may invitations be distributed in school or on the bus. Sensitivity to this issue can prevent damage to self-esteem and needless hurt feelings of our children.

BAS MITZVAH CELEBRATION

Traditionally, the observance of a girl's 12th birthday was low-keyed. In recent years, however, it has become acceptable in many communities to observe the occasion more formally; with family and friends sharing the family's *Nachas* and *Simcha*.

Rabbi Jacob Joseph Girls School helps educate your daughter and shape her values. It is important that a *Bas Mitzvah* celebration be consistent with these values, even if not held in school. Accordingly, we have established the following official school policy to guide you in your plans.

The *Bas Mitzvah* celebration should be a simple affair in the nature of a *Seudas Mitzvah* - either *Seudah Shlishis*, *Melaveh Malkah* or breakfast in the company of close friends and family. Only female friends of the *Bas Mitzvah* may be invited and entertainment should be consistent with the nature of the *Simcha*.



TEXTBOOKS

The RJJ Girls School provides textbooks for its students. It is expected that every book issued to a student will be returned in good condition.

Each class is scheduled for a library period at which time students may borrow both Hebrew and English books. Students may avail themselves of the school library during specific hours determined by the administration.

In the event that a book is not returned or is damaged, the student will be charged for the book at the rate it costs the school to replace the book. Excuses such as "My book was taken, lost, etc." will not be accepted.



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TRANSPORTATION

Parents have a variety of options for ensuring that the Students are transported to School. Some individuals privately transport and other families join in car pools.

Many students use the Busing available through the New York Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). That office determines the stops available to our school and a listing of current bus stops assigned to us is available from the Girls School Office or online. Parents should select the stop most convenient for them and communicate that to the Girls School Office before the start of the School year.

RJJ Girls School is in session on more days than the OPT allows for busing. Therefore parents **MUST** consult the official one page school calendar which is generally distributed by the Girls School Office prior to the commencement of the academic year for days when parents **MUST** provide or arrange for direct or car pool transportation. On such “carpool days,” students are expected to be punctually dropped off and picked up.

For those using OPT busing, children will be permitted to ride **ONLY** on their designated route to their regular bus stop. No other arrangements will be allowed without a note timely delivered to the Girls School Office from parents clearly stating the alternate destination. Parents who wish to pick up a child at dismissal must likewise timely notify the Girls School Office. Children will be placed on their usual designated bus unless we are appropriately notified in advance.

BUS TRANSPORTATION PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE A *KIDDUSH HASHEM* (RATHER THAN *CHAS VESHALOM* A *CHILLUL HASHEM*)! PARENTS ARE URGED TO JOIN IN ENSURING OBSERVANCE OF ALL BUS SAFETY RULES!

Students must:

- Sit down quickly upon entering the bus,
- Remain seated at all times when the bus is moving,
- Keep head and arms inside the bus,
- Keep voices low,
- Obey all directions of the bus driver,
- Help keep the bus clean and in good condition,
- Be courteous and mindful of the rights of others to ensure a safe and comfortable ride,
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the Bus.
- Bullying behavior on the Bus or at a Bus Stop is subject to school discipline.

School bus transportation is a privilege, not an entitlement; willful disregard of rules may result in loss of bus privileges.

VISITORS

If parents need to drop off a forgotten lunch, book, etc. they should bring it to the office; our office staff will make certain the item is delivered. All visitors must present themselves to the guard at the front of the building.

The faculty has been instructed not to allow any visitor to enter any classroom without written permission from the principal. When parents arrive to take a child out of school, they must wait in the school office and sign the child out.

All who enter the yeshiva building or the school yard are asked to come dressed modestly, in clothing which displays proper reverence for a *M’Kom Torah*.

CARPOOL DISMISSAL GUIDELINES



In order to assure the safety of our children and smooth operations during dismissal time on carpool days, the following guidelines have been developed. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please do not hesitate to call the school office.

Cars will pull up in front of the building, forming a line going around the “U”. The “U” should accommodate about 5 – 6 vehicles at one time. If you are the first car in the parking area, pull up as far as possible so that you are adjacent to the gravel parking area. This is to maximize the number of cars able to pull up to the building at one time.

Cars will go around the “U” to avoid reversing in the parking lot.

No reversing in the “U” is allowed at any time. This presents a tremendous safety hazard. **Any parent reversing in the “U” will be asked not to pull up to the building at dismissal time in the future.**

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS ANY PARENT ALLOWED TO PULL AHEAD OF THE CAR IN FRONT OF THEM. This has proven to present a serious safety threat. This rule must be followed to ensure the well being of your children and their classmates. The order in which you enter the parking lot should be the order in which you exit. **Any parent who pulls ahead of any other car in line will be asked not to pull up to the building at dismissal time in the future.**

Please be mindful that some parents prefer to park their cars in designated parking spots and walk through the lot rather than pulling up to the building to follow the line of cars. Do not exceed a speed of 10 mph as you drive through the lot.

If you need to go into the building for any reason at dismissal time, please park in one of the designated parking spots. **No car may be left unattended in the “U” for any length of time.**

Even if you are only running into the building for “a minute,” you may not leave your car in the “U”, against the building, or on the playground side. **Any parent who leaves their car unattended in these places will be asked not to pull up to the building at dismissal time in the future.**

Please refrain from engaging other parents in prolonged discussions at dismissal time. It is important that you pick up your children and proceed promptly in order to maintain a smooth, orderly flow of traffic.

Parents have a variety of options for ensuring that the Students are transported to School. Some individuals privately transport and other families join in car pools.

Many students use the Busing available through the New York Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). That office determines the stops available to our school and a listing of current bus stops assigned to us is available from the Girls School Office or

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BUS TRANSPORTATION PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE A KIDDUSH HASHEM (RATHER THAN CHAS VESHALOM A CHILLUL HASHEM)! PARENTS ARE URGED TO JOIN IN ENSURING OBSERVANCE OF ALL BUS SAFETY RULES!

Students must:

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- Remain seated at all times when the bus is moving,
- Keep head and arms inside the bus,
- Keep voices low,
- Obey all directions of the bus driver,
- Help keep the bus clean and in good condition,
- Be courteous and mindful of the rights of others to ensure a safe and comfortable ride,
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the Bus.
- Bullying behavior on the Bus or at a Bus Stop is subject to school discipline.

School bus transportation is a privilege, not an entitlement; willful disregard of rules may result in loss of bus privileges.

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All who enter the yeshiva building or the school yard are asked to come dressed modestly, in clothing which displays proper reverence for a *M'Kom Torah*.

APPENDIX A

CASWELL AVENUE PARKING LOT GUIDELINES:

Due to serious safety issues, Rabbi Jacob Joseph/Yeshiva Merkaz Hatorah has developed parking lot use guidelines. **These rules are all about the well being of “our” children.** In this age of heightened concerns about safety and security, the school must be vigilant about who is coming and going on the premises at all times. **Please note that all visitors to the school building will now be required to sign into a register book located in Mrs. Goldman’s office, including parents.**

Use of the school parking lot is a privilege. It is expected that anyone who drives into the parking lot will adhere to these guidelines. Anyone who violates these procedural guidelines will be asked not to pull their vehicle into the parking lot in the future.

OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:

Any time that you plan to enter the building and leave your car unattended, your car must be parked in a designated parking spot. Cars may not be parked against the front of the building, on the playground side of the building or in the “U”. **For safety reasons, the parking lot must be open to two way traffic at all times.**

If you are coming to pick up your child during the school day, you may call the office 30 minutes before the expected pick up time and every effort will be made to have your child waiting for you at the front door at the requested time.

Please do not pull in or out of the lot between 3:00 – 3:25 P.M. as this is preschool dismissal time. Extra traffic will interfere with the procedures for the safe dismissal of the preschool children.