



# PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025 | 5784-5785

## OUR MISSION

Our school is run on a system of mutual respect, for teachers, administration and students. In a warm and caring environment, full of creativity and multi-faceted approaches to education, we ignite a spark in each girl to love Hashem and Torah as well as an awareness and understanding of their own diverse potential.

We offer smaller classes, individualized learning, hand selected teachers, and an environment where every girl truly matters. An assortment of extra curricular subjects are offered as well as daily electives, provided to explore different interests and capabilities while combining integrative learning techniques.

B'ezrat Hashem, with a strong foundation of Torah and a Rabbinical panel guiding us, Yotzer Ohr students develop identity, nurture talent, discover passion and find purpose as our rising generation of creators, innovators and leaders.

## HONOR CODE

In addition, Yotzer Ohr students are required to adhere to the following Honor Code. All Yotzer Ohr students, on their honor, treat themselves and others with respect, honesty, sincerity and integrity.

- Respect is treating others with civility and consideration.
- Honesty is the quality of being fair and truthful.
- Sincerity is showing true feelings that are real and genuine.
- Integrity is the quality of having strong moral principles.

We look forward to working with you to help your daughters achieve their potential!

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Office

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# DRESS CODE

Yotzer Ohr School's dress code represents a commitment to learning and school pride, as well as respect for each other and for school. The school wide dress code also symbolizes a rigorous educational environment within a nurturing, diverse community. Students are expected to dress in school-approved clothing and to maintain appropriate dress and hairstyle.

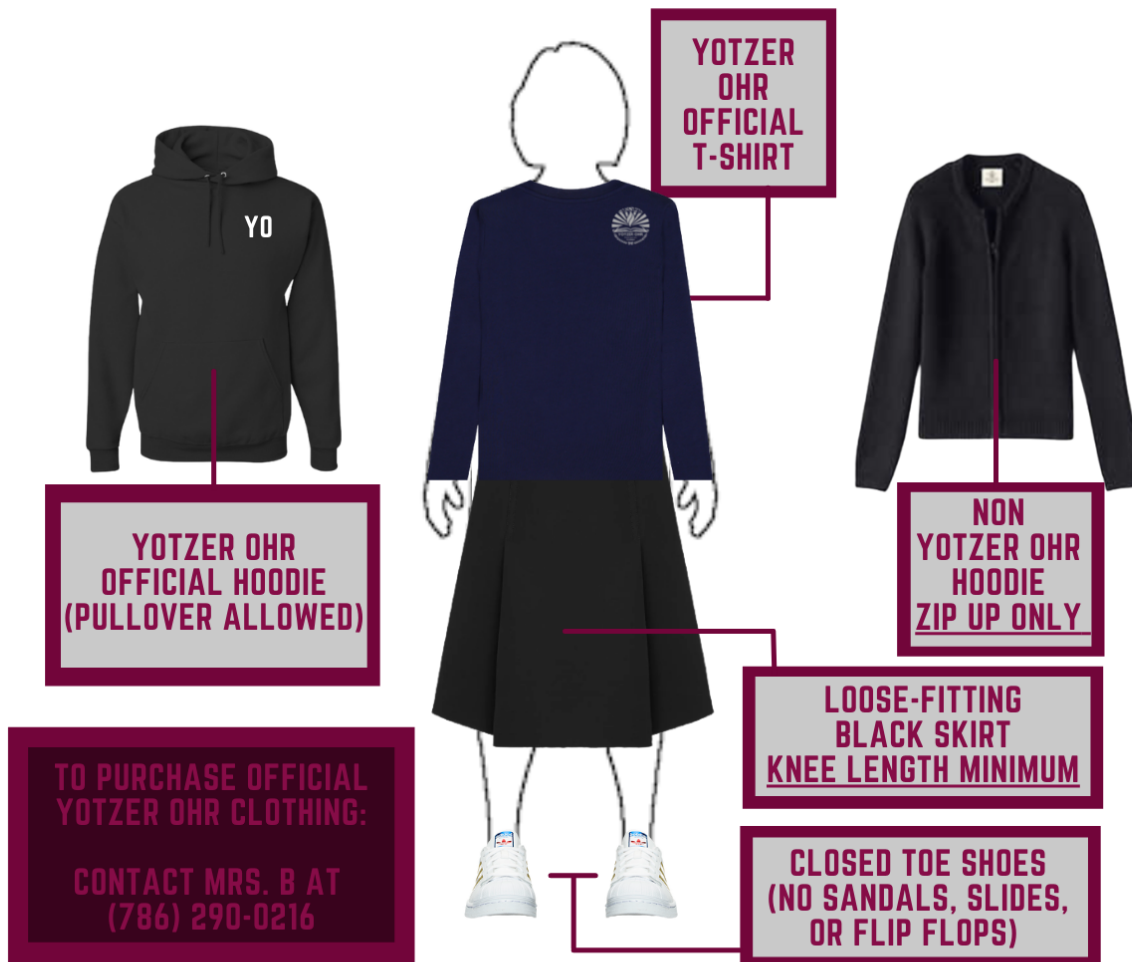
The dress code applies to all students while on the Yotzer Ohr campus during school hours (9:00 AM- 4:00 PM), including mid-year and final examination period and off-site school events. Students are expected to dress modestly when attending events and meetings held on and off campus during non-school hours. Students not in compliance with the dress code may be sent home to change.

## Uniform Attire

Girls must wear Yotzer Ohr Uniform shirt to school every day. Skirt hem must fall below the knee. If students are attending events outside of school they must dress appropriately. Shirts must cover collar bone, and come past their elbow. Skirt hem must fall below the knee, no pencil skirts. Closed toe shoes must be worn, flip-flops/thong sandals, beach shoes, Crocs and similar shoes are not permitted.

## Body Piercings

Girls are permitted only to have ear piercings. Earrings must be modest, and Yotzer Ohr re-serves the right to ask for earrings to be removed. No visible body piercings are allowed while on campus or at school related events



# ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is necessary to maintain learning continuity. Students are expected to be present for all classes; consistent, regular attendance is required to receive credit for the year's work. Students are expected to be on time throughout the school day.

- Students in Grades 5-12 are permitted seven absences per class per semester for any reason (including doctor visits, illness, and family vacations).
- Additional Absences that do not count toward the permitted seven include school sponsored trips/ events, college visits, SAT/ACT testing, AP exams, and final exams
- The eighth absence in any class incurs an automatic one-point reduction from the final semester grade. Each additional absence from each class incurs an additional point reduction from the final semester grade.
- Five (5) tardies in each class are equivalent to one absence. Every five tardies thereafter make up an additional absence.

Absences and tardies in each class are combined for a final point reduction. In extreme situations which result in a student being absent for an extended period of time, the administration will work with students and their families to create alternative plans for success. Yotzer Ohr considers each situation on a case by case basis.

If a student is absent for more than two consecutive school days, the student or parent should be in contact with the school to develop a plan of action to make up missed school work. Attendance affects academic performance, and excessive absences can impact negatively a student's grades.

## **Signing In And Out**

When arriving late, Grade 5-12 students must sign in and check in with the main office and receive a late note. After 9:15AM, girls must enter through the JCC's main entrance and enter the school via the path along the football field. Students are not authorized to leave school early, unless they have parents permission. When leaving early, Grade 5-12 students must sign out in the main office and must have parent authorization to leave early. To authorize a student to leave school early a parent must contact the school principal, and confirm the details.

# **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Parent Communication: We recognize that the parents of school students play an integral role in their children's lives and, therefore, we have multiple mechanisms for keeping them in-formed so that they can appropriately advocate or intervene on their child's behalf. . Teachers will be in touch via phone or e-mail with any academic or behavioral concerns. Teachers will also be contacting home if a student is earning a C or below to help create a plan of action.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING**

Yotzer Ohr School Counselors focus on the individual student's success academically, socially and emotionally. Whenever a need arises, school counselors are on site to discuss how to improve classroom performance, enhance self-esteem, relate better to others, handle peer pressure, overcome traumatic and/or difficult life challenges, handle stress, develop time management skills and assist students in making healthy choices.

## **SCHOOL TRIPS**

Field trips and/or overnight trips provide students with insight, information, knowledge and educational experiences that enhance curriculum. To attend, students must be in good academic and behavioral standing and are required to make up all missed work. Conduct on field trips must be appropriate and follow Yotzer Ohr's behavior expectations. Prior to each field trip, parents and students will be given permission forms to be signed and returned to the school. Administration reserves the right to restrict access to these trips.

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Trust is essential for successful schooling and academic growth. Honesty is expected in all the endeavors of Yotzer Ohr students. Homework, tests, quizzes, reports, projects and examinations must reflect a student's honest achievement. Teachers understand that students need coaching in such matters and are trained to provide careful, sympathetic guidance. However, any misrepresentation of academic achievement, in whatever form, is considered a significant violation of Yotzer Ohr's standards.

Plagiarism is one of these violations. Plagiarism is defined as the use of words, ideas or thoughts of another person without giving appropriate credit to that person. It is a form of cheating. Examples are copying information from electronic or traditional sources, submitting others' work as one's own and the use of electronic or Internet translation services. Plagiarism also includes the failure to give appropriate acknowledgement when repeating or paraphrasing another's words. Any student involved in cheating or abusing the school's commitment to academic integrity will face consequences determined by the student's division.

## **Homework**

Homework is considered a very important aspect of student responsibility at Yotzer Ohr. Students are expected to complete all assignments and to prepare thoroughly for classes and tests. The amount of time it takes to complete homework will vary from student to student. No homework should be done on Shabbat or Yom Tov.

# COMMUNITY SERVICE

Yotzer Ohr students are obligated to participate in organized school and community projects to meet their end of year service hours requirement.

Middle School Students must complete a combined total of 15 community service hours in order to matriculate.

High School students are required to complete 100 hours of community service in order to graduate

Grade 9: 25 Hours  
Grade 10: 25 Hours  
Grade 11: 25 Hours  
Grade 12: 25 Hours

## TECHNOLOGY

Yotzer Ohr students may not use mobile phones during the school day. If a girl wishes to bring their phone to school, it must be handed in to the Dean of Students at the beginning of every day. Should a parent need to contact a student during the school day, the parent should call the school office, and a message will be delivered. If mobile phones or other technological devices are used improperly, the device may be confiscated and given to the Principal. Consequences for using technology in an inappropriate manner on campus may be assigned. Yotzer Ohr is not responsible for the loss or damage of any technological items (i.e. laptops, tablets, phones, any other electronic devices) brought to school.

All students are required to have a portable lap top or chrome book in order to complete their online studies. Students computers should be fully charged everyday and ready to work. We recommend for every student to have an additional computer charger to leave at school. Computers are only allowed to be used during designated times specified in the school schedule.

If used improperly, the device may be confiscated and will follow the same protocol for mobile phones. Yotzer Ohr is not responsible for the loss or damage of any technological items (i.e. laptops, tablets, phones, any other electronic devices) brought to school.

## KASHRUT

All food prepared and brought in to the Yotzer Ohr premises is in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. All food provided by Yotzer Ohr at any off-site school function (i.e. field trips, extracurricular activities) meets the same Kashrut standards that prevail on campus. The school kitchen is dairy/parve. No one may bring food to campus or to off-site events without proper Kashrut certification.

All dairy products must be Cholov Yisrael. The following symbols represent some of the parve labels on food that are acceptable to bring on Yotzer Ohr premises:



# DISCIPLINE

Yotzer Ohr students are taught to understand and practice the rules of derech erez (code of proper behavior), courtesy and respect for themselves, others and their property, and responsibility for personal behavior. Parents and teachers are partners and important models of derech erez, and are held to the same standard.

Yotzer Ohr's philosophy and implementation of disciplinary measures are designed to teach self-discipline. Measures are corrective, with the sole purpose of ensuring a safe, secure environment that enables students to develop the academic, emotional and social skills necessary to become productive members of our campus and society at large. Yotzer Ohr recognizes that negative behavior is often an expression of underlying issues, and initial stages of addressing violations focus on identifying and addressing these issues.

Policies clearly state the expectations Yotzer Ohr has for its students and the consequences that follow when deviations from expectations occur. All school personnel responsible for the care and supervision of students are authorized to hold every student accountable for any disorderly conduct on school property and during all school-related activities.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner at all times when in school or at any school-sponsored activity. They are expected to show respect for teachers, staff members, other students, visitors and school property. Yotzer Ohr students are expected to practice honesty in all aspects of school life.

Yotzer Ohr believes that all children are good and have the ability to use their unique strengths to overcome any difficulties they encounter. Yotzer Ohr is committed to focusing on its students' strengths and giving them the opportunity to flourish. Even when students make negative choices in terms of their actions, their positive traits are highlighted and addressed as the key to correcting negative modes of action.

## DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

Any student who uses, possesses, exchanges, sells or is under the influence of illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages or cigarettes (including electronic cigarettes) on or near the school campus or at school sponsored functions may be subject to expulsion from Yotzer Ohr. Likewise, students are expected not to use illegal substances outside the school environment. Yotzer Ohr implements a policy of routine drug testing. Students who refuse to test may be subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion. Parents are notified of their child's drug test results. A student who tests positive is sent home for the remainder of the day. Additionally, before returning to school, the student is required to have an evaluation by a school-approved specialist to make recommendations for further intervention if needed. Further consequences are determined, which may include suspension, and/ or expulsion. A student who has had positive results in the past can expect to be tested at regular intervals. A student who tests positive for a second time may be subject to expulsion from Yotzer Ohr.



# HARRASSMENT POLICY

Yotzer Ohr is committed to maintaining a safe school environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Yotzer Ohr prohibits, at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities, sexual harassment targeted at any student by anyone. The School also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against any person who reports, files a complaint or testifies about, or otherwise supports a complainant in alleging sexual harassment.

The School strongly encourages any student who feels that he/she is being or has been sexually harassed on school grounds or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity by another student or an adult who has experienced off-campus sexual harassment that has a continuing effect on campus to immediately contact his/her teacher, the principal, or any other available school employee. Any employee who receives a report or observes an incident of sexual harassment shall notify the principal. Once notified, the principal shall take the steps to investigate and address the allegation.

## **Examples of Sexual Harassment**

Conduct (including electronic communications, acts or postings) which may constitute sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal - unwelcome conduct such as the use of suggestive, derogatory, or vulgar comments; the use of sexual innuendos or slurs; making unwanted sexual advances, invitations, and/or comments; pestering for dates; making threats; and/or spreading rumors about other students, and/or offers of benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Visual - unwelcome conduct such as the display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, posters, written material, cartoons, or drawings; the use of graffiti, texting and/or computer-generated images of a sexual nature; and/or the use of obscene gestures or leering.
- Physical - unwelcome conduct such as unwanted touching, pinching, kissing, patting, or hugging; the blocking of normal movement; stalking; sexual acts or assault; and/or physical interference with work or study directed at an individual because of the individual's actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

All accusations will be investigated. It is Halachically forbidden to make false accusations. If accusations prove to be false, students will be held accountable by being suspended and depending on the accusation possibly expulsion from school.

# BULLYING POLICY

Yotzer Ohr is committed to ensuring all staff and students feel safe from bullying in all its forms. Definition of Bullying “Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person and occurs when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person’s health and safety, or their property, reputation or so-cial acceptance.”

Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.

There are four broad categories of bullying.

1.**Direct physical bullying** e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.

2.**Direct verbal bullying** e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.

3.**Indirect bullying** - This form of bullying is harder to recognize and often carried out behind the bullied student’s back. It is designed to harm someone’s social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:

- Lying and spreading rumors.
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate. Provoking a food-allergic reaction.
- Mimicking or encouraging others to socially exclude someone. Damaging someone’s social reputation.

4.**Cyber-bullying**, or e-bullying, is bullying which involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, (mobile) phone and text messages, instant messaging (SMS), chat rooms and video internet sites e.g. YouTube. It can be particularly harmful be-cause it can happen anywhere and at any time. Thus young people who are the victims of cyber-bullying have no place where they feel safe. If the bullying is of a serious and threatening nature, then obviously it becomes a legal issue and students and parents should seek advice by reporting the matter to the police.

## **THREATS & VIOLENCE**

Threats to persons or property are taken seriously at Yotzer Ohr. Community members have an obligation not to pretend or joke about weapons and violence. Inappropriate communication, including communication in jest – written or verbal – is treated as a major infraction.

Members of the Yotzer Ohr community must immediately report to faculty and staff threats or threatening behavior, especially those involving weapons or violence of any kind. Fighting, assaulting, hazing, threatening or intimidating words or actions are not acceptable student behaviors. Any student involved in a fighting, hazing or scuffling incident with another student is subject to disciplinary action.

No adult or child is permitted to bring a weapon within 1,000 feet of Yotzer Ohr school grounds, nor to a school-sponsored event or on property that is school-affiliated - on the person or in the vehicle. Anyone who brings a weapon to school is turned over to the proper authorities and such students may be expelled. Florida law defines a weapon as a sword, sword cane, firearm, electric weapon or device, destructive device, razor blade, box cutter or common pocket knife. Yotzer Ohr has the right to determine an item not included in these examples as a weapon.

## **VANDALISM**

Respect for property, including personal and school property, and at on-campus and off-campus school events, is expected of all members of the Yotzer Ohr community. Any acts of vandalism will be subject to the discipline policies set forth by the school.

## **ORDERING FOOD**

Every student is expected to come to school with the necessary food to get them through the day. Yotzer Ohr will be offering a hot lunch program this year as well. Food delivery services such as UberEats, ChowNow, etc. are not allowed as per the JCC's rules.

Students will be allowed to go to the Kosher Subway on campus only during the 30 minute lunch period. Those who fail to return to classes on time may lose their ability to go to the Kosher Subway.

Students must bring cash or credit cards to pay for any meals they may purchase during a school day as phone payments such as Apple Pay are not allowed under our phone policy.

## **PHONE & COMPUTER RECORDINGS**

Florida has what is known as a "two-party consent" law for wiretapping and voice/conversation recordings. Under Fla. Stat. ch. 934.03, it is illegal to intercept or record a "wire, oral, or electronic communication" unless all parties to the communication consent. This means, as a general rule, you cannot record a phone or face to face conversation without everyone's consent, and doing so without consent will result in immediate suspension and can open you up to a civil lawsuit by the recorded party as well as possible criminal prosecution.

## **SUSPENSION**

A student may be suspended for conduct that impairs the morale or good conduct of the students. Violations may include, but not be limited to, insubordination, irregular attendance, continued tardiness, involvement with disruption of the instructional program, physical/emotional harassment, vandalism or habitually failing to give proper observance to the requirements of the school.

Notice of suspension is given to the parent and the Head of School. These violations also may lead to expulsion depending upon the circumstances. Any student whose conduct warrants disciplinary action may be denied or removed from organization membership, honors, offices, special trips and similar privileges.

# ILLNESS, INJURY & EMERGENCIES

## **Illness**

While we understand that our parents may have other commitments during the day, we make every effort to maintain a healthy environment for everyone. If your child has a fever or any other contagious symptoms, please keep your child at home until symptoms have subsided or you have a doctor's note. If during the school day, a child has a fever, vomits, has diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash, or exhibits excessive cold or flu symptoms, a parent will be called to pick up the child from school. While waiting for the parent or guardian, the ill child will remain in the of-fice under the supervision of the administrative staff.

A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. A child must be symp-tom free for 24 hours regarding vomiting and diarrhea. Children with nasal discharge or heavy coughing should remain at home until these symptoms are gone. If a child has been di-agnosed with contagious illness (pink eye, strep throat, fllu, Covid-19, lice, etc.) inform the school office as soon as possible so that we can take the proper precautions. We follow Child-care Licensing, the CDC, and Department of Health regulations regarding when children may return to school. Specific information will remain confidential and we will share only what is needed to prevent the spread of an illness. This will all be done with sensitivity, ensuring our children and families are treated with kindness and respect. Please read and follow the Covid-19 protocols that may be sent home with your child during the year. 'When in doubt, leave them out' is a good way to help prevent the spread of illnesses.

## **Injuries**

Minor injuries such as superficial cuts and bruises will be handled in the classroom or front of-fice. If there is any question as to the severity of injury, 911 will be called first, followed by the parents.

## **Emergencies**

It is important that each parent keep the school informed of the current telephone number where he/she can be reached during the day, as well as current numbers of friends or relatives who are authorized to act on behalf of the parents if parents cannot be reached, should an emergency occur. No child will be permitted to attend school until all emergency information is on file.