

2019 – 2020 /// 5780

# PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK



**vancouver**  
**HEBREW ACADEMY**

*Torah Education for Life... כי הם חיינו*

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## Welcome to the Vancouver Hebrew Academy family.

Vancouver Hebrew Academy is a co-educational, Orthodox Jewish elementary school, where children are inspired in a stimulating educational environment to develop a lifelong passion for learning, academic excellence and devotion to Torah Judaism.

At the core of this philosophy is our dedication to nurturing each child's acquisition and implementation of the fundamentals of Jewish *middot* (character traits) and Torah values, and his or her pursuit of Torah knowledge.

Our strong curriculum of Judaic and General Studies is designed to encourage children to meet their maximum potential, to foster their curiosity about the world and their Jewish heritage, and to engender in them a sense of commitment to the school, Israel and the larger Jewish community.

This Parent Handbook is a guide to VHA's school policies and an overview of its operating procedures. We look forward to a wonderful 2019 – 2020 academic year together.

Thank you for being a part of the VHA family!

**Rabbi Don Pacht,**  
Head of School

### 2019 – 2020 Board of Directors

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You are able to contact members of the Board directly by sending an email to [president@vhebrewacademy.com](mailto:president@vhebrewacademy.com).

### VHA Mission Statement:

Vancouver Hebrew Academy is a warm and inclusive elementary school serving the diverse needs of Jewish students and their families in Greater Vancouver.

Our mission is to teach Torah Judaism and values through a strong and balanced curriculum of Jewish and General studies. We believe that Torah education inspires the pursuit of academic excellence and provides children with the foundation skills to fortify their Jewish identity and ignite in them a passion for a lifetime of exploring their Jewish heritage and the world.

## Section 01 – Communication

### Address and Contact Information

#### Vancouver Hebrew Academy

1545 West 62nd Ave.

Vancouver B.C. V6P 2E8

**Phone:** (604) 266-1245

**E-Mail:** [vha@vhebrewacademy.com](mailto:vha@vhebrewacademy.com)

Rabbi Don Pacht, *Head of School*

Rabbi Tzvi Goldman, *Principal of Judaic Studies*

Mrs. Shannon Brodie, *Principal of General Studies*

Mrs. Gayle Taylor, *Financial Secretary*

Mrs. Jolene Marston, *Administrative Secretary*

In addition to our weekly school Newsletter, the school and teachers use email as a primary means of communication between school and home. Please be sure that we have your most up-to-date email address and that our email address is

on your contact list to ensure that you receive all communication from the school.

The following information highlights many of VHA's governing policies. If you wish to review our policies, please contact the office.

### Office Records

It is very important that your personal information on file with the office is current, especially emergency contact and allergy alert information. **If you move or change phone numbers, please contact the school office immediately.** Please make sure the person listed as a backup emergency contact is aware that you have listed them with the office. (Ideally, the person chosen should live in close proximity to the school and should be generally available.)

VHA maintains a privacy policy in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act of British Columbia. No personal information or records from the school will be released to any individual or institution without your consent. If you wish to review a copy of the school's privacy policy, please contact the office.

### School Directory

In accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act of British Columbia, VHA does not furnish a class list to parents. VHA publishes a Parent Directory that provides contact information for VHA families. Inclusion in the directory is optional.

### School Newsletter

The VHA weekly newsletter is emailed every Friday (or the last day of school of that week).

### Orientation

VHA will hold "Meet the Teacher" Conferences in late September. This orientation is an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with your child's teachers, understand the expectations and goals for the school year and for you to share any relevant

information about your child. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Phones

Students are not permitted to use the school phone, except in emergencies. Students may not have cell phones at school. In a situation of extenuating circumstances, please contact the Administration to make arrangements.

## Money

Issues involving financial matters should be directed to the school office. All money sent to school with a student must be sent in an envelope that is clearly labelled with the child's name, grade, and reason for the payment. Cheques should be made out to: Vancouver Hebrew Academy. Please note: If you are paying for separate events, please make out separate cheques.

## School Closure

In the event of a school closure, parents will be informed via email around 7:00 a.m. You can also listen to All News Radio, 1130 on the AM dial, for weather-related school closure information. In the event of an emergency closure during the school day, the school will notify parents directly.

## Registration

Registration forms are available on our website. New students are accepted based on space availability, personal interview between the administration and prospective parent(s), and records from previous schools, where applicable. Enrolment decisions are at the discretion of the Head of School.

# Section 02 – The Parent/Teacher Partnership

At VHA we are dedicated to working with you, the parents, as our partner in your child's education. Our first tool is open, ongoing, productive communication between school and home. The following guidelines will help us to maintain open lines of communication and to maximize the efficiency of our organization in responding to parents' concerns.

## Student-Specific Discussions

Academic, behavioural and social issues relevant to your child should first be directed to the classroom teacher. Each teacher has provided a preferred method of contact (i.e. email address, phone number). Teachers are committed to responding to parents within 24 hours or sooner. Teachers will often look to administration for input in working to resolve a situation and will always keep parents and administration informed of any significant developments.

Teachers and parents will agree on a reasonable follow-up time to measure the progress of a situation as is warranted and appropriate. If the parents and teacher cannot resolve an issue, it will be brought to the administration to assist directly in reaching a resolution.

## Policy Issues

Questions regarding school policy can be brought directly to the administration:

**Rabbi Don Pacht**, *Head of School*  
dpacht@vhebrewacademy.com

**Rabbi Tzvi Goldman**, *Principal of Judaic Studies*  
tgoldman@vhebrewacademy.com

**Mrs. Shannon Brodie**, *Principal of General Studies*  
sbrodie@vhebrewacademy.com

## Appointments

Staff are quite busy during the school day and have many responsibilities that must be tended to (even during break times). In order for us to offer the proper consideration for your concerns, we ask that you avoid “catching” teachers in the hall (or before and after school), to discuss delicate/important matters. Please contact the teacher via phone or email to set a proper meeting time. Meetings with administration are coordinated through the main office.

## Support Services

Please note that referrals and requests for support services must be directed to your child’s classroom teacher. That request will be forwarded to administration and assessed and prioritized by our special education team. Information about services available to families within the community can be obtained from the Administration.

## Confidentiality/Professionalism

Privacy legislation forbids staff members from discussing another child’s program. Please respect that some information can not be shared. We will always do our best to help you understand every aspect of a situation and to work to resolve any concerns.

Also, we ask that you help us maintain an appropriate level of professionalism by “keeping school at school.” Many of our teachers are part of the broader Jewish community and you will see them at Shul and social functions. Please avoid school-related conversations in such venues, particularly if such topics are sensitive and/or confidential.

## Section 03 – Schedule

Parents are urged to drop off and pick up their children on time.

- There will be an adult on supervision from 8:15 a.m. – 8:25 a.m. each morning on the South Playground only.
- Before Care is available from 7:50am – 8:15am. **This program requires pre-registration.**
- Dismissal is at 4:00 PM and parents/guardians are expected to be at school to pick up their children on time.
- Children not picked up by 4:00 p.m. will be placed in our aftercare program and parents will be charged the \$5 daily rate

## Kindergarten – Grade 7:

8:25 a.m.	Line up Grades K–1: Covered area, outside north entrance (61 <sup>st</sup> Avenue) Grades 2–7: Covered area, outside south entrance (62 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue)
8:30 a.m.	Classes begin
10:15 a.m.	Recess
12:00 p.m. – 12:25 p.m.	Lunch: K – 7
12:25 p.m. – 12: 50 p.m.	Lunch Recess K – 7
2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Recess
4:00 p.m.	Dismissal
<b>2:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Early Friday Dismissal Grades K – 7 (October 25<sup>th</sup> through March 6<sup>th</sup>)</b>



## ii. Daycare

- 8:25 a.m. Parents line-up with children under the covered area, outside north entrance (61<sup>st</sup> Avenue)
- 12:30 p.m. Regular Dismissal (Even on days when an 'Early Friday Dismissal' schedule is in effect). Parents pick-up children from under covered area, outside north entrance (61<sup>st</sup> Avenue)

**In January, we will be opening our full-day daycare program. This program will operate on a parallel schedule to grades K through 7.**

## Recess

Students in Grades K – 7 enjoy three outdoor recesses per day (*see Schedule*). During inclement weather, children may play in the covered areas outside the school entrances; only in extreme conditions will recess be held indoors. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather, including a pair of outdoor shoes (*see Shoes*)

## Field Trips and Special Programs

Periodically, teachers may plan field trips or special programs to complement and enhance their instructional programs. Sometimes, these trips or projects may require hiring transportation or the purchase of special materials or admissions. The PAC often assists in subsidizing these programs, but in order to offset the costs of providing the best programming available the school requires parents to pay an "Activities Fee" (Field Trip/Special Projects). **The 2019 – 2020 fee is \$35 per child. This assessment is included on the book order form.**

## Assemblies

School assemblies are held approximately once per month for grades K – 7. The theme of the assembly may be either Judaic or General Studies. Parents are welcome to attend any assembly and are particularly invited to an assembly in which their child is participating.

## Section 04 – Attendance

Children are expected to attend school every day it is in session and to be on time. Chronic lateness to school in the morning may adversely affect a child's academic performance and success. Dismissal is 4pm. On time pick-up is required.

## Absences

Please call or e-mail the office if your child is going to be/or is absent. Teachers will always do their best to support a student who was absent; however it is the student's responsibility to make up missed work.

## Leaving School Early

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students out of school early for any reason other than medical or family emergencies. Children will not be permitted to leave the building unescorted during the school day. **If a child must leave early, the adult who is responsible for that child must come to the office to sign the child out of school. A staff member will then see that the child is brought to the office.**

## Parents must not interrupt classes to find students.

This is very disruptive to the classroom's learning environment and poses a significant security risk. The school will not release a student into the custody of any adult other than the parent or guardian on file, unless instructed to do so by said parent or guardian.

## Holidays and Trips

Parents are discouraged from planning holidays or trips that will result in a child's extended absence from school. However, if this is unavoidable please notify both the office and your child's teachers in writing in advance. It is very important to discuss your travel arrangements with your child's teachers. In some cases, it may be possible for the teachers to provide the student with a general outline and some pre-organized worksheets in advance or work with

a student on alternative assignments which can be completed during the student's absence. However, please keep in mind that teachers' lesson plans may not be available several weeks in advance and he or she may be unable to accommodate requests for specific, detailed work, with accompanying worksheets and tests. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to make up work missed due to absence.

## Illness

If your child is ill and going to miss school for more than a few days, please call the office so that your child's teacher can be notified. If the illness is communicable, e.g. chicken pox, please contact the school office immediately so that a note can be sent home to the parents of other students in the class.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you or your emergency contact will be notified and asked to make arrangements to pick him/her up. **Please make sure all your contact information on file in the office is correct and your emergency contact is aware he/she has been listed.**

If your child has been sick, especially with flu, please keep him or her home until he/she is fully recovered. **If your child has had a fever with the illness, please keep the child home for 24 hours after the fever has broken.**

When children are sick at school and sneezing or coughing, other children and staff can become ill. We are concerned for the health of everyone in the school and appreciate when you share our concern and accommodate us in this regard.

## Medication

The school may only supervise the taking of prescription medications as directed, in writing, by the child's physician. Non-prescription medications such as Tylenol are not available in the office, and will not be given to any child. If your child must take prescription medication during the day, please see the office staff to make appropriate arrangements.

## Section 05 – Transportation

### Carpool

Please remember to inform the office in the morning of carpool changes so that there is sufficient time to inform the appropriate classroom teachers to ensure your child makes it home safely.

**Calling the office at dismissal time to inform of carpool changes is not advised** as the end of the school day is a busy time.

### Drop-off/Pick-up

Safety is our primary concern during drop-off and pick-up. Children must be dropped off and picked up on time. *(See [Schedule for drop-off and dismissal times.](#))* **Please exercise extreme caution as you drive near the school and, of course, adhere to all traffic and parking guidelines.**

- Students are dropped off on W 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue at the main door of the school. We ask that parents please approach heading west so children do not need to cross the street.
- Please approach the school west-bound on W 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. When your car arrives, a staff member will send your children out to your car. There is no need to leave your vehicle.
- If you do plan to leave your vehicle, please park on the south side of W 61<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

## Section 06 – Safety and Security

School security and the safety of the students is of critical concern to us. The VHA Board of Directors has created a Security Committee that continually monitors the security needs of our school. Our committee works in cooperation with the Vancouver



Police Department and the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver to ensure that we have appropriate measures and protocols in place. **Visitors to the school, including parents, friends and guests MUST report to the main office.**

VHA employs a full-time Security Guard who continually monitors the school grounds and works with Administration to ensure the safety of our students and school.

Our entrances are locked during the day except during recess. Staff use two-way radios while on supervision.

**We encourage parents in or around the school to assist us by staying alert and reporting any suspicious activity to the office.** If you have any questions or concerns regarding our security procedures, please contact the administration.

During the course of the school year, staff and students participate in a regular schedule of fire, earthquake, lockdown and evacuation procedures. The school maintains a fresh supply of drinking water and emergency food rations, as well as first-aid and emergency supplies.

## Section 07 – Dress Code

All students in Grades K – 7 are required to wear VHA's school uniform. **Students will not be permitted to attend class wearing non-uniform clothing! Substitute uniforms are not acceptable.** If needed, parents will be asked to bring items to school for their child. VHA has contracted with:

### Cambridge Uniforms

Unit 135 – 1305 Welch Street,  
North Vancouver (entrance on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue)

**Tel:** 604-924-9009.

[cambridgeuniforms.com](http://cambridgeuniforms.com)

Cambridge Uniforms schedules fitting sessions for students at VHA, during the last weeks of the school year. Parents will be notified of this schedule in May. Additionally, fittings can be conducted at their North Vancouver showrooms.

We ask, in advance, that you please be respectful of the school policy when purchasing uniforms. If you are concerned with the cost of the uniforms, please contact the school office to inquire regarding the availability of used uniforms.

**Please ensure that uniforms fit correctly and look neat and presentable.**

Please remember to label all clothing.

### Boys: Grades K – 7

- Grey rugby or adjustable waist uniform pants
- Navy golf shirt, long or short sleeves, with VHA logo.
- Plain, navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater, or VHA logo sweater (no other logo or trims).
- Grads may wear their current grad sweatshirt
- Kippah
- Tzitzit

### Girls: Grades K – 7

- Full pleated tartan skirt, extending below the knee.
- **Girls in grades K-3 have the option of an A-line plaid tunic.**
- Navy golf shirt, long sleeves, with VHA logo.
- Girls in grades K-3 may wear short sleeved navy golf shirts with VHA logo
- Plain, navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater (no other logo or trims).
- Grads may wear their current grad sweatshirt
- **Navy** knee high socks or tights.\*
- **Navy** ankle socks (Kindergarten to grade 3 only).\*

\*Note: Grey socks are no longer part of the dress code.

Grey pants, navy logo polo shirts and tartan skirts MUST BE purchased from Cambridge Uniforms. Socks and plain navy cardigans/sweaters may be purchased elsewhere.

## Gym Strip

Students in grades 2-7 may bring a change of clothing to wear as gym strip. These items need not be purchased through Cambridge Uniforms.

## Shoes

**Students must have a second pair of shoes for indoor use. Outdoor shoes are not permitted in the classroom.**

Indoor shoes must be proper shoes or runners. Boots, slippers, sandals or crocs may not be worn as indoor shoes. Heelys (or other wheeled shoes) are not permitted at school.

Children in Preschool (as well as others that have difficulty with tying shoes themselves) are encouraged to wear Velcro to speed the changing of shoes from outdoor to indoor and vice versa.

## Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located immediately inside the school's 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue entrance. Articles that are found in school should be placed in the Lost and Found boxes. If the found article is valuable, it should be turned in to the office.

# Section 08 – Food

At VHA, we are committed to teaching children about balanced nutrition and a healthy relationship with food. We demonstrate this by ensuring that the vast majority of foods provided by the school come from the Canada Food Guide's "recommended foods" columns. We ask that parents please support us in these efforts by providing nutritious snacks and lunches and by keeping junk-food to a minimum.

Please feel free to contact the school for a copy of the Canada Food Guide and for suggestions for appropriate foods.

## Nut Restrictions

Please keep in mind when preparing snacks and lunches for your children that VHA is a Nut Restricted School. Nuts and nut products are not allowed in the building. Below is a list of nuts that are included in this restriction.

- Peanuts and Peanut Butter.
- Tree nuts (including Almonds, Walnuts, Cashews).
- Sesame Seeds and Sesame Oil. THIS INCLUDES HUMMUS.

Products that MAY contain nuts are permitted. As well as the above items, there are other foods that do pose an allergy risk. Therefore, please remind your children that the sharing of food is not allowed.

## Kashrut

VHA recognizes that there is a wide range of halachic opinion and practice in regards to kashrut. To best serve all the families of our school, all food served to students in school must be pre-packaged and must have an acceptable Kashrut symbol — unless prepared in school under supervision of the Kashrut Supervisor. **Only parve or dairy (chalav yisroel)** foods may be served to students, and, where applicable, the foods must also be **pat yisroel**. Prepared foods may be ordered from local food establishments under the supervision of BCK/Kosher Check. Food prepared in private kitchens under BCK/Kosher Check supervision, or under the supervision of an official Kashrut Supervisor of another Orthodox institution, is also acceptable.

We ask that parents only send their children to school with food that has an acceptable kosher symbol or supervision (please see the school for a list of commonly found Kosher symbols). Even if the item is labelled "100% pure", many times ingredients are not listed which are used in making the food. If you are not

sure about a product, please contact the BCK/Kosher Check at 604-731-1803, or [info@koshercheck.org](mailto:info@koshercheck.org).

## VHA Events Policy

VHA is always looking for opportunities to build family and relationships. To this end, many off-site social events are held throughout the year, typically in private homes of VHA families, where camaraderie and friendships can be best forged. In order to facilitate the hosting of such an event, the following guidelines have been formulated:

- Any prepackaged food must carry an acceptable kosher symbol, as per the BCK/Kosher Check guidelines printed above.
- Any home-baked or home-cooked food must be prepared in a kitchen certified kosher by a local Orthodox Rabbi. (Arrangements can be made for the use of the VHA kitchen.)

Please keep in mind that as many of our families only eat chalav yisroel and/or pat yisroel products, provisions should be made to accommodate.

## Lunch

Lunches may be Parve, Dairy or Meat.

**Benching/Birkat HaMazon: All children are required to bring some bread in their lunch** so that they may fully participate in benching (blessing after meals). Benching is an important educational experience and we must have full student co-operation and participation to be successful.

## Birthdays and Class Parties

Please check with your child's teachers **well in advance** before bringing any food items to school. We encourage families to consider a more meaningful (and lasting) way to celebrate, such as donating a book to the class in honour of the day. If you are having a party for your child outside of school, **please do not hand out invitations at school unless the entire class is invited**.

# Section 09 – School Supplies

## Materials

Students need to bring their school supplies on the first day of school.

Primary grade teachers will request funds from parents to purchase bulk materials for children in grades K – 3.

Students in grades 4 – 7 will be responsible for purchasing their own supplies. A list of required supplies is mailed out to families in August.

## Books

Teachers work hard to find the most appropriate materials, workbooks and textbooks for their classes, tools that will enhance curriculum and student learning. Parents receive a list of books needed preceding the school year.

## Toys and Games

Students are welcome to bring toys and games to school to be used during recess. However, we ask that students **do not bring electronic devices to school, such as Ipods, even if the student does not plan to use them during recess**. These items are often quite valuable and the school is unable to monitor them properly or to ensure their security. In certain instances, a teacher will allow students to bring mp3 players for educational use. Additionally, toys that resemble weapons may not be brought to school.

Please note that in an effort to encourage exercise and outdoor play during recess, VHA may restrict the use of toys, games and trading cards during the school day.

It is expected that students will share with their friends in accordance with the values we teach at VHA.

## Section 10 – Evaluations

### Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times per year to students in grades K – 7. In addition, interim reports are sent to parents in October. These brief surveys allow teachers to open a line of communication early on in the school year. Working together from the start will help us all create the most successful academic experience possible for your child.

Report cards are written in the manner prescribed by the Ministry of Education of British Columbia. Report cards use a checklist and are written in narrative format, explaining the learning objectives of the teacher and how well the student accomplished them.

Questions or concerns regarding report cards or interim reports can be addressed at parent/teacher conferences ([see Parent-Teacher Conferences](#)) or in a meeting scheduled directly with the teacher. **Parents are asked to please speak directly to the teacher first regarding issues concerning their child.** If the issue(s) cannot be resolved, parents should make an appointment with the administration.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held three times, during the 2019 – 2020 school year. The first conference is a teacher-led “intake interview” held in September. This meeting is an opportunity for you to learn about your child’s classroom teacher and their expectations and goals for the year. There will also be an opportunity for you to share relevant information about your child with his or her teachers. The second conference is a parent-teacher conference, where information can be shared about your child’s progress over the course of the first term of school. It is an excellent opportunity for you, together with the teacher, to set goals for your child for the upcoming terms and address any areas of concern. The third conference will be held in March.

## Section 11 – Conduct

The Board of Directors of Vancouver Hebrew Academy recognizes its obligation to all members of the school community to provide a positive climate and a safe, healthy environment such that effective, purposeful teaching and learning may take place.

VHA’s guiding principle is *Ve’ahavta lereyacha kamocha* — love your neighbour as yourself. To that end, it is expected that all members of the school community will conduct themselves in an ethical and lawful manner in accordance with Torah values and which demonstrates respect for self, others, property and the environment.

Students are expected to attend classes and be on time. They are to complete all assigned work to the satisfaction of their teachers. Students should remember that wherever they go, they are representatives of Vancouver Hebrew Academy. School rules are in effect at all times on school grounds, at school activities and during school-sponsored field trips. A violation may warrant intervention or disciplinary action. Good behaviour, while expected is regularly encouraged, acknowledged and rewarded.

All students are expected to keep the building, grounds and the surrounding community neat and clean. Putting litter in its place is all part of good citizenship. Classes assume responsibility for keeping the grounds clean on a weekly rotating basis.

### Code of Conduct

At Vancouver Hebrew Academy, we believe that all children have the right to learn in a safe, caring and orderly environment. Our expectations are that students will maintain an attitude that is cooperative, courteous and respectful.

Our code of conduct is designed to provide guidelines for appropriate student behaviour while under the jurisdiction of the school or at any school sponsored function.

## Appropriate Behaviour

**Be respectful to yourself.** The Torah teaches us that we must care for ourselves. In school, this means to care about your learning and your own personal safety.

Some examples include:

- always do your best
- make good choices
- be on time and ready to work
- complete your homework on time and stay organized

**Be respectful to others.** The *Mitzvah* of “Loving your fellow” means being considerate of others’ personal feelings and properties.

Some examples include:

- be polite and wait your turn
- treat others with respect
- use good listening skills
- be honest and tell the truth

**Be respectful to property.** The Torah teaches us that we must treasure every item of use. At school, you should care about your school and your environment, and protect school property.

Some examples include:

- clean up after yourself
- take good care of materials
- ask before borrowing
- protect school property from damage

**Be safe.** In *Pirkei Avot* — Ethics of the Fathers — we are warned not to separate from the community. Students need to learn and follow school rules to maintain our cohesive school community.

Some examples include:

- walk calmly — no running in hallways
- stay in designated areas
- report dangerous situations to staff

## Inappropriate Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour can consist of, but is not limited to:

- rudeness, swearing
- fighting (or play fighting)
- lack of respect for others, teasing
- throwing objects (rocks, sticks, snowballs, etc)
- defiant behaviour
- running in hallways
- unauthorized leaving of classroom or school grounds
- littering

## Consequences

Consequences will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, respecting individual rights, ages and maturity; and be restorative rather than punitive in nature.

Inappropriate behaviour typically has the following consequences:

- review of expectations and time away from the group to reflect on their actions
- review of expectations, written assignment and/or loss of privileges
- parents are informed
- meeting with parents
- short term (in school or at home) suspension
- long term suspension
- consultation with law enforcement officers
- expulsion

## Safe and Caring School Environment

Safe and caring school environments are free from acts of:

- bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment and marginalization
- threat and intimidation

- violence in any form
- abuse in any form
- discrimination in any form
- retribution against a person who has reported incidents

Are free of misuse of:

- cyberspace, cell phones, electronic devices, computers – whether they negatively impact individuals or the school environment

And do not tolerate the presence of:

- theft and vandalism
- banned or dangerous substances
- weapons or replica (toy) weapons

### **Conflict Resolution Strategies:**

Students at VHA commit to using effective strategies to resolve differences. These steps are discussed in class and reviewed regularly with staff. They include:

- Stop and clarify before reacting.
- Give the benefit of the doubt.
- If someone is mean or unkind, don't behave the same way back. Find a way to STOP the behaviour.
- Do not escalate problems.
- Seek help from an appropriate person.

Remember: Being part of a social group means helping each other out and being willing to compromise.

### **Conflict Resolution Policy**

Issues about the curriculum, school policy, harassment (*see following*) or religious matters should be directed to the administration. Issues regarding a student and/or parent and his or her teacher should be directed first to the teacher and subsequently, if needed, to the Principal or Head of School. In either case, if the matter is still not settled to the satisfaction of all parties VHA's Due Process and Harassment Committee may be consulted to assist in resolving the conflict.

The Due Process and Harassment Committee consists of a teacher, member of the board of directors and a member of the parent community appointed by the board. It is understood that all matters brought before the Principals, the Head of School, Due Process and Harassment Committee or the Board, will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. (A copy of the full Conflict Resolution and Harassment Policy is available in the office.)

### **Harassment**

VHA considers harassment in any form to be unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to improper conduct, objectionable behaviour, use of offensive language or abuse of authority by one employee against another employee, an employee against a parent or vice versa or a parent against a board member or vice versa.

Proven harassers shall be subject to discipline and/or corrective actions, in accordance with the policies set forth by the Due Process and Harassment Committee (*see Conflict Resolution*).

### **Child Abuse Policy**

Please note that the full Child Abuse Policy is available for review in the official Policies Manual in the school office.

## **Section 12 – Parent Involvement**

### **Parent Advisory Committee**

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) enables all parents to play an active role in enhancing the course of their children's education. The PAC works hard to develop school spirit, promote community programs and events within the school, fund raise to provide additional resources to the school, create a family feeling by making parent and family social events, and foster good communication between



parents and teachers. We strongly encourage all parents to participate in the many PAC events. The meetings are held about once every other month and are open to the entire parent body. The PAC collects a fee per child (with a family maximum), to cover the costs associated with various programs and initiatives coordinated by the PAC. This fee is collected with the book orders in September. The fee for 2019-2020 is \$40 per child with a family maximum of \$120.

### School Service Requirement

In a small school like ours the need for help from parents is important in allowing us to provide the best possible programming for our students. **Our school service program requires each family to contribute 18 hours of time assisting in various school programs throughout the school year.** There are literally dozens of service opportunities available; the PAC coordinates these activities. The PAC emails the parent body regularly to advise you of such opportunities.

Parents are required to submit a cheque in the amount of \$450 with the school registration forms, post-dated to June 1, 2020. **The cheque will be cashed at the end of the year ONLY IF the family DOES NOT meet its school service obligation.**

### Fundraising

The PAC promotes several projects throughout the year to raise funds. There is always a need for parent volunteers to make these efforts as successful as possible. These dollars go to support special programs for our children at school. Our Purim Mishloach Manot Project is the major fundraiser for VHA and all parents are expected to participate. Parents are encouraged to bring their fundraising suggestions to the attention of the PAC. To volunteer, please contact the PAC via email at [pta.vha@gmail.com](mailto:pta.vha@gmail.com).

### Lice Check

The PAC contracts with a professional organization to conduct lice checks several times each year to ensure that we are able to maintain a healthful environment for staff and students. We ask that you help us in this effort by periodically checking your child's head for lice. The cost of contracting these services is included in the \$40 per-student PAC fee.

## Section 13 – Vancouver Hebrew Academy Society

The Vancouver Hebrew Academy Society is the governing body of the school. All VHA parents are eligible to join the Society. As per The British Columbia Society Act, a membership fee of \$1 must be collected. The Society meets at least one time per year for the annual general meeting. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for parents to learn about the priorities of the Board of Directors, as well as to vote on important issues.

The Board of Directors, in consultation with Administration, handles general policy decisions throughout the year. The Board meets regularly to monitor the school, and set its direction. Copies of school policies are available upon request to any member of the Society. Members of the Society are encouraged to contact members of the Board to discuss ideas and ask questions. Please see Page 3 for contact details. The minutes of each Board meeting are posted in the VHA school office.

Thank you for being a part of the VHA family!



Everyone is  
made to feel  
welcome.

The Torah  
is our lens to  
view the world.



Doing your best  
is what you are  
here for.

Learning is  
a positive  
experience.



## Our Guiding Principles

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