

## **2009/2010 PARENT HANDBOOK FOR PRESCHOOL**

### ***WHAT IS ZAREINU?***

Zareinu is a Jewish Day School and treatment centre that provides special education and therapies to a population of children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges.

- Zareinu provides on-site therapy and education.
- Each individually designed student program meets the unique needs of children between the ages of birth and 21 years of age.
- Zareinu is a model-teaching centre for university programs and community colleges to train therapists and special education students.
- Zareinu offers the most up-to-date therapeutic techniques as well as creating new and innovative strategies.
- Zareinu provides a setting rich in Jewish tradition and teachings.

Zareinu strives to, whenever possible, encourage inclusion through opportunities for supported integration.

Zareinu looks towards increasing acceptance of children with special needs in the community.

### ***ZAREINU AS A MODEL TEACHING CENTRE AND CLINIC***

Zareinu is used as a practicum placement for students from: The Faculties of Education, Social Work, and Medicine; and Programmes in Early Childhood Education, Developmental Service Work, and Co-operative Education. In addition, Zareinu is a teaching clinic for students in Physical, Occupational, Speech and Language Pathology, and Music therapies.

### ***PHILOSOPHY***

Our philosophy is based on the belief that each "special child" is a valuable member of our community and has the right to an adapted education, opportunities for improving life skills, communication and our respect for their strengths, as well as, a focus on their needs. The family must be an integral part of our efforts; their input treated with respect and their participation in planning individual programs for their child is encouraged. We believe that every child has potential and deserves our united efforts in providing therapies and learning strategies that will improve the quality of life for each child and family at Zareinu.

**Zareinu's Preschool Program is licensed by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services.**

## **PROGRAM OFFERED**

### **Diagnostic Preschool Program**

- Nursery Program – This stimulating class is a therapy-based, early childhood educational setting with a 2:1 student to teacher ratio. It provides intensive individual programming as well as a Jewish preschool curriculum. The staff includes specialized early childhood educators, life skill teachers, teacher assistants and the full team of Zareinu therapists. Ages: 2-5 years old. Full or part time attendance.
- All children entering the preschool will receive a phone call from one of the teachers before their start date to answer any questions and address concerns.
- On the first day of school, parents must bring in
  - a) the child's immunization records;
  - b) 3 sets of seasonal clothes for changing purposes;
  - c) A bag of diapers;
  - d) A box of wipes;
  - e) Any written instruction regarding the child; and
  - f) Sunscreen with the child's name on it
- Parents will receive a Daily Communication sheet regarding their child's day.

### **GENERAL STUDIES CURRICULUM**

The preschool program is developed through thematic units and concepts that reinforce social, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth. Children are exposed to new learning situations through modified, "hands on" activities. The adapted learning environment provides children with an opportunity to understand basic and abstract concepts, experiment, create, construct, explore, plan, set goals, and solve problems. Students develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in language rich environments. They use mathematics in everyday tasks to practice problem solving and reinforce the concepts of number sense, numeracy, spatial sense, and geometry. Science is investigated in the classroom through exploration, prediction, questioning, classifying and gathering information. Children are encouraged to use their growing awareness of others while relating to their peers by participating in social and co-operative activities.

#### Evaluation Procedures:

Observation, standardized tests, anecdotal reports, routine tracking, team meetings, student generated work. Individual programs are implemented throughout the year. All staff working with preschool children meets on a weekly basis to monitor achievement of goals.

#### Assessment Procedures:

Preschool children are screened using the Hawaiian Early Learning Profile in the classroom. An individual program plan is then compiled and parents will meet with teachers to discuss this in November. Parents will receive a written report. The goals are reassessed in February and parents receive a written report. A final report is written during the May/June period. Parents can request a formal meeting with teachers and therapists at any time throughout the year. In the classroom, there is an open door policy and staff is happy to discuss a child's progress at anytime. There is a phone in the room so that parents can call regarding any issues surrounding the child.

### **JEWISH STUDIES CURRICULUM**

Students will have the opportunity to learn and be immersed in Jewish values and culture including Davening and Siddur skills. They are exposed to Hebrew life experiences through shul visits, heritage traditions and holidays. The students receive in-class instruction.

## ***THERAPIES AT ZAREINU***

Our staff creates a therapeutic environment for their students using a transdisciplinary model. Developmental objectives created by teachers and therapists are addressed individually and in groups throughout the school day in both formal and informal settings with the help of everyone working with the children. We believe that therapeutic goals can only be reached if they are practiced and reviewed in a variety of ways every school day. Individual and group therapy sessions are scheduled weekly for students based upon their IEP objectives. Sometimes, however, scheduled sessions may not take place because of other school activities or the absence of the therapist. These sessions will only be made up if we anticipate a prolonged absence of the therapist.

## ***GENERAL INFORMATION***

### ***ADMISSIONS & TUITION POLICY***

In order to ensure a place for a child, the following steps need to be followed:

1. Payment of the registration fee before June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
2. Post dated cheques, payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the full amount of the tuition are to be delivered to the school prior to a child's placement.
3. No child may begin the program if there is an outstanding tuition balance from a prior year.
4. If a child leaves the program during the middle of the year, tuition cannot be refunded as a result of the commitments made to staff. Tuition may only be refunded in extraordinary circumstances.
5. Zareinu is a partner with the Board of Mercaz. If a parent is unable to pay the full tuition and requires a subsidy, a completed subsidy application form must be submitted. If a family has children in other day schools, those schools will be contacted in order to determine the total family tuition obligation. The family will then be advised regarding the tuition fee.
6. Any questions regarding financial arrangements should be directed to Randy Spiegel, Executive Director, and will be addressed by the Admissions and Tuition Committee.

**Parents must agree to Zareinu's Admission & Tuition Policy and confirm by checking the appropriate box on the Student Application.**

Zareinu reserves the right to dismiss a child should the school be unable to provide adequate services for that student. If the family requires, Zareinu will help the parents find a more suitable setting for their child. At the parent's request, Zareinu staff will agree to remain in contact with the family and the new setting to facilitate a child's well-being during transition.

### ***ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL***

**Arrival** – School Programs begin promptly at 9 a.m. Please notify school if a child will be late, particularly if he/she are sent by bus, taxi, carpool, etc. Every child's safe arrival is a priority.

**Dismissal** – School ends at 3:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, through the year.

Friday Dismissal times:

Sept. 11 – dismissal is 3:00 p.m.

Nov. 6 – 2:00 p.m. Friday dismissal begins

April 9 - 3:00 p.m. Friday dismissal begins

Every child's safety is important to Zareinu. Please notify the office if anyone new will be picking up the child. It is essential that children are picked up on time at the end of the day.

**Please note: Preschool Program – Arrival and dismissal times are flexible.**

**Absence** – Please inform the office prior to any absences.

## **COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING**

Parents should always feel free to call the office to arrange a phone call or meeting with any of Zareinu's team, if they have questions or concerns. Therapists will contact the parents regularly to touch base.

Progress Reporting will be available through parent/team meetings. After an individual educational (IEP) and an individual service plan (ISP) for therapies have been created, the school will invite parents to share ideas and review these plans midterm, in the late fall and once again in the early spring. These sessions will be followed by written reports. Although these are the officially designated times, the staff is happy to share ideas and address concerns as they arise.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Staff is available to care for your children beginning at 8:00 AM and from 3:30 – 5:30 PM for a fee on a prearranged basis. This service will cost \$200 per morning per year and \$400 per afternoon per year. We will require payment in advance and there will be no refunds for absences because of our fixed costs in hiring supervisory staff.

## **DRESS CODE**

In keeping with the Orthodox traditions of Zareinu, female staff are asked to wear dresses or skirts and tops with a modest neckline. Men should wear a kippah/head covering.

## **FIRE AND EVACUATION PLAN**

The Fire Department has approved Zareinu's Fire Plans in the event of an emergency. The evacuation designation for an emergency (i.e. bomb threat) would be the Bernard Betel Centre at 1003 Steeles Avenue. Fire drills are held according to the York Region Fire Department's expectations.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Staff is offered training in CPR and First Aid every two (2) years.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

**Dangerous Allergies** - Some students entering our building are highly allergic to peanut and nut products. These children can have a fatal reaction to the smallest trace of a substance such as peanut butter. In order to provide a safe environment for the students of Zareinu, the school has instituted a NO PEANUT/NUT POLICY.

In order to implement this policy, the school asks you not to send children to school with ANY foods containing peanuts or nuts. Zareinu regrets the inconvenience that this policy may cause for some parents and students. However, the school hopes that you understand the dangers that this type of allergy can pose. As it is difficult to monitor all food being brought into the building, please cooperate with Zareinu in this matter.

Substitutes: Suggested nutritional and menu substitutes: salad, eggs, salmon and tuna salad, macaroni and cheese.

Please inform the principal – in written form – about any other allergies a child has or emergency medications (EpiPen, puffers, ventilators) which are required during the school day.

**Emergency Information** – Make sure the school is notified immediately whenever there is a change in the contact persons for emergencies. Please make sure that Health records include updated information.

**First Aid** - The office takes care of minor injuries, superficial cuts, etc. If indications are that the injury is more severe, parents will be notified. If, in the judgment of the school, the matter requires medical attention, we will insist that a parent arrange to pick up the child immediately. In deciding on the appropriate line of action in each particular case, school staff exercises judgment with utmost care. Wherever possible, we must consider the well being of all the children in the classroom and children who present as being unwell will be sent home.

If special medical conditions apply, please notify the office of the details of the condition and emergency procedures to be followed. If a child has any condition potentially requiring the use of an **EpiPen**, please ensure that the expiry date is carefully monitored. Please ensure that you sign the relevant EpiPen form in the office. Parents are required to train classroom staff re EpiPen administration.

There are times when a child **must** be taken home or kept home. We offer the following as guidelines:

**If a child has any of the following symptoms: fever, sore throat, earaches, stomach pains, nausea, unusual rashes – check carefully with the pediatrician to evaluate the condition. Sending children to school with these symptoms or even with just a “bad common cold” can impede the child’s own recovery and can also spread the sickness to others. If these or any other symptoms of illness are noticed, contagious or otherwise, parents will be notified. If, in the school’s judgment, there is any likelihood of a child infecting other children, parents will be asked to collect the child from school. If a child continually exhibits serious symptoms, a doctor’s note or contact may be requested to better understand the child’s needs. Children who are vomiting or who have diarrhea must be kept home for 24 hrs. until clear of all symptoms according to Ministry requirements.**

Please notify the office immediately if a child contracts any communicable disease. Chicken pox and measles are the most common. Zareinu follows the Public Health regulations as to how many days must elapse before a student is allowed to return to school after a communicable illness. Please cooperate with the school in preventing the spread of illness to students as well as to staff members.

Please remember that some of our students are very medically vulnerable. Proximity to children with coughs, colds and fevers can lead to their contracting serious illnesses. **If we believe that a child has a contagious illness, the parent will be notified and the student will be isolated from others until the parent arrives.** Please cooperate with the school in preventing the spread of illness to students as well as to staff members.

**Immunization** – Schools are mandated by the Public Health Department to require immunization of students. Health Inspectors come to the schools to check on this. They have the legal right to exclude from school any student who has not complied with regulations. Please ensure that all forms sent home in this regard are returned promptly.

**Medications** – Whenever possible, parents should request that their physician schedule medication to be taken before the student leaves for school or when the student arrives home. When this is not possible, the school will cooperate in dispensing medication. Prescription medication must arrive in the original bottle and a Medication Administration form must be obtained from the office. **WE CANNOT ADMINISTER ANY MEDICATION WITHOUT THE ADMINISTRATION FORM.** Pre school parents must include a note from their doctor prescribing non prescription medication.

**Toilet Training** - Children starting toilet training are required to either wear pull-ups or a water proof pant over regular underwear to prevent contamination of surfaces due to leaking urine or feces.

Parents are requested to follow Zareinu’s Behaviour Management Policies while on school property. Any parents needing assistance may request this, as needed.

## **KOSHER FOOD**

Please send in kosher food for lunch and snacks. Dairy is requested. Any food brought in for birthdays must be obtained from a kosher, peanut-free source. **No homemade items will be served.** Parents bringing in food for birthdays must inform the staff of the type of food, where the food was purchased and the date of purchase as this information needs to be recorded by the teachers in a log book.

### ***PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS (2 per year)***

Special Education Staff, Teacher Assistants and therapists keep up to date by attending conferences, as well as being invited to provide workshops and lectures for the many children's agencies with whom Zareinu is affiliated.

### ***SCHOOL CLOSING***

School closing is a rare occurrence, however, when this does happen, schools affiliated with the Board of Jewish Education follow the decision of a specific committee. Radio stations make the announcement. They will be posted in the fall.

### ***SMOKING POLICY***

According to the Smoke Free Ontario Act, no person is permitted to smoke in the school building or parts of the school building. A second infraction will be reported to York Region Public Health Staff. Violation of this policy could result in a \$5,000.00 fine.

### ***SOCIAL WORK SERVICES***

Our Social Workers provide guidance and support to families regarding Ministry funding, transitions and support dealing with difficult family issues that relate to the daily challenges of providing for their child(ren) with special needs.

### ***VOLUNTEERS***

The many wonderful volunteers at Zareinu are orientated with a 4 part workshop series delivered by Zareinu's therapists and teachers. Our volunteer coordinator sources, interviews and monitors this valuable group of caring volunteers. If you know of anyone interested in volunteering, please call Mrs. Grubner at 416-783-7867.

### ***IMPORTANT AUTUMN DATES***

Tuesday September 8	First day of School
Monday September 14	Open House
Tuesday October 6	Family Sukkah Party
Friday November 6	Early Winter Dismissal begins