



**SIR  
MANASSEH  
MEYER**

International School

# **PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK**

## **PRE -SCHOOL**

### **2021 - 2022 ACADEMIC YEAR**

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## Pre-School Parent Information Handbook 2021-22

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### Welcome to SMMIS

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Sir Manasseh Meyer International School (SMMIS) family. We are delighted you have chosen to send your child to SMMIS.

SMMIS is a school where every child is known, valued and challenged to achieve their best. We look forward to working in partnership with you to ensure this.

Please take time to read through this booklet which has all the information you will need about joining our school. If there is additional information that you require, please look on the school website or contact the school at [frontdesk@smm.edu.sg](mailto:frontdesk@smm.edu.sg).

Please ensure that the Emergency Contact Form and the School Home Agreement have been completed. Please note your child will not be admitted to the school until these forms are complete.

The school Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was set up so that parents and the school can work together to create a partnership that promotes and supports the philosophy, goals and programmes at SMMIS for the benefit of our children and the community.

The PTA consists of one parent of a student of each class who serves as the class parent. PTA meetings are held monthly to plan events, support the school and discuss future plans. If you would like to get involved, please email frontdesk.

If you have joined SMMIS in the middle of the school year, your child will be assigned a buddy to ensure that they are fully taken care of and that they feel at home.

To see a full list of SMMIS policies, please visit our website at [www.smm.edu.sg](http://www.smm.edu.sg).

Please refer to the school calendar on our website for a more detailed outline of school events.

You will see the Home School Agreement at the end of this document. This has also been sent to you via DocuSign, please ensure that you sign it.



Ms Elaine Robinson  
**Principal**



Ms Justine Fredman  
**Head of Pre-school**

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### Pre-school Programme

- Full-day
- Quality care for children 18 months through to 4 years of age
- Hours: 8:00am to 3:40pm, Monday to Thursday; 8:00am to 2:50pm on Friday.
- International Pre-school curriculum

### Vision, Mission and Values

#### VISION

Bettering the world through a first-class education imbued with Jewish values.

#### MISSION

To teach the love of learning, guide the heart towards truth, and build meaningful ties with all.

#### VALUES

**Lifelong Learning** – To foster an on-going desire for the pursuit of knowledge

**Love** – To demonstrate dedication and devotion to everyone

**Kindness** – To be friendly, generous and considerate to everyone

**Resilience** – To overcome every obstacle and setback

**Peace** – To be able to work together in harmony

**Community** – To create a deep sense of belonging and build a vibrant community that celebrates its diversity and works together to make a difference in the world

**Honesty** – To be truthful, sincere and upright in our dealings

**Collaboration** – To cooperate with one another in order to accomplish a shared goal

**Reflection** – To be thoughtful and able to adapt in challenging situations

**Respect** – To accept somebody for who they are, even when they're different from you

**Justice** – To ensure fairness to everyone

**Creativity** – To think outside of the box

**Enquiry** – To seek constantly for answers when in doubt

### GOALS & PHILOSOPHY

SMMIS preschool adopts a holistic viewpoint with elements of the Reggio Emilia approach to teaching and learning, recognising the connectedness of the mind, body and spirit. We see children's learning as integrated and interconnected. We engage in an emergent curriculum and way of planning that focusses on being responsive to children's interests, strengths and abilities to create meaningful experiences. Learning through play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings. Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Play can expand children's thinking and enhance their desire to know and to learn. Priority is placed on the individual child and on developing each child's innate curiosity and sense of wonder in a developmentally appropriate way.

## Belonging

Experiencing *belonging* – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighborhood and a wider community. *Belonging* acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of *belonging*. *Belonging* is central to *being* and *becoming* in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

## Being

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world.

*Being* recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

## Becoming

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. *Becoming* reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Children's Learning:

Children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. Physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic aspects of learning are all intricately interwoven and interrelated.

Play is a context for learning that:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- stimulates a sense of wellbeing.

Children actively construct their own understandings and contribute to others' learning. They recognise their agency, capacity to initiate and lead learning, and their rights to participate in decisions that affect them, including their learning.

Viewing children as active participants and decision makers opens up possibilities for teachers to move beyond pre-conceived expectations about what children can do and learn. This requires teachers to respect and work with each child's unique qualities and abilities.

Teachers' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning.

Children's early learning influences their life chances. Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism and engagement enable children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

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### **Outcome Statements:**

#### Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Children feel safe, secure, and supported

Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency

Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities

Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

#### Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation

Children respond to diversity with respect

Children become aware of fairness

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

#### Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

#### Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating

Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

#### Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

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### Goals for each child include helping them to:

- Move along the development sequence at his/her optimum rate using learning outcomes from the Early Years Australian Framework.
- Learn through identifying children's interests and incorporating them into a play setting.
- Develop positive attitudes toward school and learning.
- Develop positive work habits and skills, such as: attention span, independence, self-help skills and following a daily routine.
- Develop foundations for reading, writing, visual skills, auditory skills, left-to-right orientation, interest in mark making, letter awareness, association of letter to sound, and rhyming, at his/her own developmental pace.
- Develop a love for literature and to become familiar with literacy and language.
- Develop cognitive skills such as: problem solving, synthesizing, analysis, and classification.
- Develop the foundations of numeracy, one-to-one correspondence, counting association of set to symbol, part/whole relationships, and measurement and graphs.
- Develop language skills, including speech and listening skills at his/her level of development.
- Learn social and emotional skills such as managing emotions, experiencing positive and rewarding relationships, compromise, cooperation, negotiation, and verbal assertiveness.
- Develop large and small motor abilities.
- Develop and understand the importance of creativity and diversity. We welcome every opportunity to expand the child's view of the world as a place rich in many cultures, races, religions and customs. SMMIS Pre-school is open to all families, regardless of ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. We work with families to provide an inclusive pre-school environment for all children. Diversity extends to the family structure as well, and we are committed to the philosophy of treating all family situations equally and without bias. We respect all family's religious traditions. We encourage you to share your family's traditions with our children and staff.

### FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

Please provide the following items on or before your child's first day at our programme. **ALL** items **MUST** be labeled with your child's first and last name. Blankets, soft comfort items and sheets need to be taken home and washed at the end of each week or more often if necessary.

#### Non-Toilet Trained Children

- Formula or breast milk (if needed)
- Pacifier (if needed)
- Stuffed animal or other comfort item (if needed for separation)
- 2 complete changes of clothes
- Sippy cup/bottle
- Child-sized blanket
- Cot sheet
- Sunscreen
- Nappies (Nappy cream)
- Wipes
- Mosquito Repellent



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### Communication & the School Newsletter

You will receive the weekly school newsletter, which will update on you on issues of the week. Teachers will upload photographs and homework information onto a Seesaw digital platform for each individual class. Please ensure that you check this regularly as this is the main form of communication between teacher and parents.

If you need to discuss any issues regarding your child at school, the first port of call is usually the Class Teacher. They can be contacted either by telephone via the school office or by email. Our email addresses follow a common pattern: [firstname@smm.edu.sg](mailto:firstname@smm.edu.sg).

We use e-mail as the main communication tool to maintain school-home contact as it is the quickest, most expedient way to get information to our families. We therefore encourage that parents regularly check their e-mails.

Please ensure that the school office has an updated email address for you and your family.

The chart below indicates the best person to contact for a whole range of queries; if you are in any doubt or do not know the correct email address, please address all correspondence to [frontdesk@smm.edu.sg](mailto:frontdesk@smm.edu.sg) and the office will ensure it reaches the correct members of staff.

<b>Nature of query</b>	<b>Whom to contact</b>
Progress or behaviour in an individual subject	Class teacher/Subject teacher
Progress or behaviour in several subjects	Class teacher
Student's wellbeing or family circumstances	Class teacher
Incidents and issues outside lessons	Class teacher
Payments including School Trip payments	Finance Office
Student absence	Front desk & Class teacher, Bus company
SMMIS Buses	Nam Ho DMC Pte Ltd
All other enquiries (or where you are unsure)	Front Desk

The ease and immediacy of email can be very useful, but it does have drawbacks. We do ask parents to join us in respecting normal rules of courtesy in emails, and to maintain the professionalism of the contact.

Staff will do their best to respond quickly to any concerns, but you will understand that this may not be the same day. We are happy to arrange meetings in person where necessary, and often more complicated issues are better addressed this way.

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At many Pre-schools, parents are able to have daily contact at the beginning or end of the day with class teachers, and sometimes with the Principal or other senior staff too. If the concern needs escalating higher, the class teacher may refer it to the Vice Principal, the Head of Phase or other senior staff as required.

Teachers are unable to talk or meet with parents while their class is in session.

Please do not communicate with teaching staff, other parents, students, or administrators in a disrespectful or threatening manner.

### OPERATIONAL POLICIES

#### Hours and Closures

- SMMIS hours of operation are from 8:00am to 4:00pm, Monday to Thursday and 8:00am to 3:00pm on Friday. Our school will be **closed** during all Jewish holidays and Public holidays as well as over school holidays.

*\*Please see your enrolment calendar for specific dates.*

#### Special Occasions, Jewish Festivals and Shabbat

At SMMIS we enjoy celebrating the Jewish festivals as a community. Your children will participate in communal Rosh Hashana, Tu B'shevat and Pesach celebrations, as well as activities on Succot, Chanuka and Purim.

Every Friday the children welcome Shabbat in their classrooms, and in turn will lead assemblies where parents are welcome. Children are encouraged to wear white or Shabbat clothes on Fridays. We will also celebrate other cultural days and National Holidays relevant to Singapore.

#### Authorisation to Release Child

- Only those individuals listed as authorised pick-ups are allowed to pick up your child (this person may be asked to show ID).
- In order for your child to be released to a person other than parent/legal guardian or authorised pick-up, permission must be given to the teacher in writing. Verbal permission is not enough but, we can accept e-mails.

#### Legal Custody

The Pre-school cannot refuse to release a child to the child's parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of the child. In most cases, both parents have equal custody rights unless a court or valid written separation agreement proves otherwise. If you are experiencing custody difficulties, we strongly urge you to keep the Head of Pre-school fully advised of circumstances that affect your child and their drop-off and pick-up routines at SMMIS. Divorced or legally separated parents are required to provide copy of custody documentation. Parent records will be kept confidential in the child's file.

#### Parental Absence from Singapore

If parents are out of the country at the same time and guardianship of children is temporarily assigned to others, the school's Front Desk and the student's teacher should be informed of the name and contact details of the guardian. This is to ensure that we are able to contact the appropriate guardian in case of emergency. It is strongly recommended that in such cases, a letter of guardianship be given to the temporary guardian.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY, PROCEDURE AND INFORMATION

Children are encouraged to regularly attend preschool as it is extremely important for the child to settle in well. Routine becomes part of the child's day and therefore helps to make them feel more secure and have a sense of belonging. Due to the international nature of the community in which we live, some absences from school are unavoidable. However, regular school attendance is expected as frequent absences may prevent a child from developing to their full potential.

SMMIS will call parents or guardians when a child has missed three consecutive days of pre-school to establish with parents or guardians the reason for the absence.

### Withdrawal

A month's written notice is required if you are going to withdraw your child from the pre-School. Payment is due for the month's notice period, whether or not the child attends during that time.

### Tuition and Fees

Tuition is on a pre-pay basis. All fees are due regardless of attendance. There will be no reimbursement for unused childcare due to illness, vacation or other absenteeism. The expenses of providing a developmentally appropriate programme continues daily, whether a particular child is in attendance or not.

Monthly payments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month.

If a tuition payment for child care services is more than five business days overdue, your child/children will not be allowed to attend until fees are current. If there continues to be an outstanding balance at the end of the month, this will result in a hold being placed on student registration and records. Accounts that remain delinquent and are placed for collections, may be charged a reasonable attorney fee, collection fee up to 50% of overdue charge or court cost.

### Drop off and Parking

Parents can park at B1 carpark and bring the child to the lobby at Level 1.

### Failure to Pick up Your Child

In the event that a child has not been picked up 15 minutes after their scheduled pick-up time, we will call you. **Please make sure your contact names and numbers are updated on your registration forms.** If you are late collecting your child more than three times a late fee will be imposed.

## POSITIVE GUIDANCE POLICY

Young children crave consistency and structure. They thrive in an atmosphere where they are given plenty of choices and a few simple rules to follow. It is our belief that children need space and opportunity for play in order to interact with their friends.

Our goal in guiding children is for them to move towards controlling their own behaviour. We avoid using techniques that will damage the child's good feelings about themselves or others.

We begin by arranging the environment to prevent behaviour problems. This includes planning interesting activities, not asking children to be still for too long, and meeting their needs for food, rest, and active play.

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When children do misbehave, we positively guide them in finding a better way to solve the problem. Because a very young child does not have the cognitive maturity and are very ego-centric, it can be very difficult for them if they do not get their way. Conflicts will arise. When they do, we will guide children in a constructive manner as discipline is viewed as an opportunity to teach children better ways of handling their frustration and anger. Very young children will be redirected into other activities.

When misbehaviour includes destroying or abusing materials, the children will be given the chance to use the materials again in an appropriate manner, but if continued the materials may be put away until another day when the child will be given another opportunity to use it appropriately. When children disrupt group activities, they can choose to participate without interrupting or choose another activity which would not interrupt the group time. Small and large group activities are always optional in all classrooms.

If your child has had a difficult time, the staff will give you a verbal or written note which summarises your child's day. We will then work together with the family to assure consistency at home and at school in working with the child, and all will be discussed in a confidential manner that is respectful to your family.

### **Our Methods of Positive Guidance Include:**

- Encouraging children to solve problems through the use of words
- Learning to acknowledge feelings and associate feelings with actions
- Redirect children to focus on a different activity in a positive manner
- Tell children what they can do, rather than what they can't do
- Continual focus on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
- Positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behaviour that should be continued in the future
- Assisting children in planning actions and language for similar situations in the future
- Modeling kind, patient, and gentle actions, words and behaviour

### **Special Needs Policy**

*Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programmes and services are access, participation, and supports.*

**Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion**, excerpted from: "A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), April 2009"

Our goal is to meet the needs of every child at SMMIS Pre-school by acknowledging that all children have their own special needs at one time or another. We are often the first educators to identify these needs, and we see facilitation of early intervention services as a critically important aspect to our work with young children. We closely watch the development of all the children in our care and, should we have a question, we will take the following steps. Throughout this process, we ensure that the

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confidentiality of every child is protected:

- We will document development and note when behaviours seem outside the developmental range over time for children of this age (through anecdotal notes, and samples of work) and meet with the Head of Pre-school and the SENCO.
- We will contact the family and communicate our concern in writing and verbally. We may request their permission to arrange for a screening. If the family agrees, we will help to coordinate a screening through the appropriate system or agency for that family.
- If the family refuses to pursue a screening or consult with their child's school system, and the need presented by the child requires additional programmatic resources, families may be asked to assume the costs of those additional supports for their child's inclusion in the programme. The Principal will be responsible for the hiring and supervision of the additional staff.
- If the screening indicates an area of concern in a child's development, teachers, director and parents will meet with the special needs coordinator for that school system or agency and develop a plan for the child in writing.
- Typically, these plans will involve modifications to our classroom environment or practice, and guidance will be provided to teachers to support their work.
- In some cases, a school system may recommend that a child be enrolled in a different programme, where there may be more resources available to provide early intervention.
- In some cases, certain adaptations to our programme may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that wherever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.
- Specialists may determine that we are not able to serve the child. Staff and administrators will let the family know as early in the year as possible if this is a possible outcome, so that the family can pursue other placement options. The family will be notified verbally and in writing.
- The programme has three considerations when asking a child to leave: a) has implementation of strategies over time resulted in improvement, or have the concerns persisted or escalated? b) Is the programme able to meet the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group as a whole? c) Is there a safety issue regarding the child or other children in the classroom? Each case is considered on a case-by-case basis, and the programme will apply every recommended strategy to support the child's progress before considering termination.

### **Our policy for inclusion of children with special needs is as follows:**

SMMIS Pre-school will integrate children with disabilities and other special needs (such as chronic illness) and children without disabilities in all activities possible.

Children with special needs and their families shall have access to and be encouraged to receive a multidisciplinary assessment by qualified individuals, using reliable and valid age and culturally appropriate instruments and methodologies, before the child starts in the facility. The multidisciplinary assessment shall be voluntary and focus on the family's priorities, concerns, and resources that are relevant to providing services to the child and that optimize the child's development.

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The Individualised Education Programme (IEP) and any other plans for special services shall be developed for children identified as eligible in collaboration with the family, representatives from the disciplines and organizations involved with the child and family, the child's health care provider, the staff of the facility (depending on the family's wishes), and the agency's resources and state laws and regulations.

If a child has an IEP, the Principal will be responsible for coordinating care within the facility and with any caregivers and coordinators in other service settings, in accordance with the written plan.

A child with special health care needs shall have a special care plan on file that includes emergency contact information, health provider, triggers, signs and symptoms of the condition and treatment instructions.

In all cases, we place the best interest of our children and families at the center of all plans, and work with the family and with community partners to ensure that the best plan is developed.

### Steps for Addressing Problem Behaviours:

- The behaviours of children shall be addressed by the classroom staff as outlined by our Positive Guidance Policy. This could include positive reinforcement for any appropriate behaviour, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment, or the teacher may respectfully help the child gain control when necessary. Classroom staff shall observe all children and document these behaviours to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating factors of the problem behaviour. A strategy will be put into place and observed over a specific period of time for any improvements. At no time shall the staff use shaming, the withholding of food, or physical punishment of any kind.
- When a child exhibits a problem on a continual basis over an ascertained period of time, that is not resolved through the appropriate behaviour management strategies, the classroom staff will meet with the Head of Pre-school to document the problem behaviour and ask for further guidance.
- If the behaviour problem is still not resolved, using strategies that the teachers have already put in place, the Head of Pre-school will request a meeting with the child's parent(s), to discuss the problem behaviour. The Head of Pre-school, Parent(s), SENCO and Teaching staff will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behaviour. During this process, the teaching staff will keep the Head of Pre-school and Parent(s) informed of the progress in resolving the problem. Observations will be documented, and a copy will be given to the Parent(s) as well as placed in the child's file. If a child's behaviour results in the injury of another child or staff member, that child's parent(s) will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation will be given and placed in the child's file.
- If the pre-school staff feel that they need further assistance in resolving the behaviour problems, the programme may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside agency. If the preschool staff feels the behaviour may result in a special need, the programme may, with parental permission, refer the child for an evaluation. If the parental permission is refused, and the problem behaviour continues, the continued enrolment of the child will be reconsidered with the provisions listed below.

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If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations of learning difference, the programme will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the programme. In some cases, certain adaptations to our programme may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that wherever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.

- If all of the above steps fail to resolve the behaviour problem, the programme may ask the parent(s) to obtain care for their child at another pre-school. The programme will provide the parent(s) with an appropriate amount of notice and will try to assist the parent(s) in obtaining alternative care and resources.
- Written documentation of all of the steps above will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child's file.

An alternative strategy that the Pre-school used is that they have the Behaviour Guidance Strategy Chart in place. The form is used to write down details of what the teacher is observing. It is very important that the language used is objective and not subjective. The teacher takes notes from several observations. The notes are reviewed. Teachers question what common patterns/ similarities are seen? Does the behaviour happen at the same time every day? Is it during large group time? During transitions? This will help to know what the triggers are. Once the patterns, commonalities and or triggers, are determined the teachers can develop a strategy for the child. The strategy is listed on the form. Teachers observe the child and make notes of the response of the strategy. Make sure all staff who work with the child are aware of the strategy. Teachers are consistent with the chosen strategy. Teachers are specific with the amount of time and make changes as needed. Parents are informed of the strategies and work as a collaborative partner with the teacher.

### Non-discrimination Policy

It is prohibited for any SMMIS staff member to discriminate in the enrolment of children and families at SMMIS Pre-school on the basis of race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, veteran status, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or citizenship status.

### Confidentiality Agreement

All records provided regarding your child and family finances are confidential. We also ask that you respect this confidentiality by not asking staff to discuss your child or other children outside of SMMIS pre-school. The staff at SMMIS preschool understand the importance of this policy and feel uncomfortable when asked to discuss confidential issues concerning children in the programme. We encourage you to bring up child and preschool issues with the Head of Pre-school.

All information about families and staff, including life circumstances are kept confidential. No personally identifying information will be released or discussed outside the programme.

### Programme Curriculum

All classrooms utilise the 5 Learning Outcome Statement approach to learning, which is a comprehensive, rigorously researched curriculum model that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child. Each classroom environment is set up around SMMIS pre-school:

### **Process Art**

The Process Art Area is a place filled with materials that children can enjoy on a purely sensory level. Here children can create and represent their ideas in a visual form. On a table or the floor, at an easel or a workbench, children draw, paint, knead, cut, glue, and put together unique products of their own choosing. Sometimes they simply explore the materials and enjoy the process. At other times they create designs or make something that represents a real object, place, or living thing. Process art is another language children use to express what they know and what they feel.

### **Reading/ Mark making**

The reading area is inviting and engaging with a variety of picture books, stories and information books for children to access throughout the day. Children are encouraged to make marks. Children practice holding a pencil and make marks by attempting to control their muscles. This enhances their physical development by improving their fine motor skills and developing hand– eye coordination.

### **Dramatic Play**

In the Dramatic Play Area, children break through the restrictions of reality. They pretend to be someone or something different from themselves and make up situations and actions that go along with the role they choose. When children engage in dramatic play, they deepen their understanding of the world and develop skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

### **Blocks**

Blocks naturally appeal to young children because they feel good to the touch, are symmetrical, and invite open-ended explorations. When children construct, create, and represent their experiences with blocks, they grow in each area of development.

### **Science/Discovery**

The Science Area is a place to find answers to questions. It is a place to spark curiosity and wonder using new and interesting materials. In the Science Area, children can use their senses to touch, feel, taste, smell, and see. They can act on objects and observe what happens next. Teachers help nurture children's curiosity by joining children in the Science Area and posing questions. Children respond by using their thinking skills to investigate and explore. In the Science Area, all areas of development can be enhanced.

### **Music and Movement**

Music naturally delights and interest's children. By including time for music and movement, we provide an outlet for children's high spirits and creative energy. Music and movement experiences help develop both sides of the brain (an important finding in recent brain research) and contribute to children's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development.

### **Literacy and Language**

We follow Phase One of the Letters and Sounds programme. Phase one concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in phase two. The emphasis during phase one is to help children become attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

### **Numeracy**

We follow the Growing with Mathematics programme which views children as active learners who construct their own mathematical understanding through interacting with their environment and peers with teacher support. A large variety of materials and manipulatives are used in order to learn essential math concepts.



### Sand and Water

Play with sand and water involves sensory experiences that appeal to young children. They need little introduction to playing with these materials. While sand and water play can delight the senses, it also can challenge children's minds and promote all areas of development.

### Messy Play

This is all about exploring, there is no right or wrong. Young children can engage in unstructured exploratory play which focuses on experimenting with different materials without an end goal. This allows children to make their own discoveries using their senses, curiosity and knowledge while learning to take risks, learn social skills, improve their fine motor skills, attention spans, language and problem - solving skills.

We believe children learn and develop skills and confidence through active engagement with these centres and each other. Children are encouraged to explore activities and materials at their own pace which have been planned to stimulate each of the five developmental areas (social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive). It is our goal to create a nurturing environment where a child's natural love of learning will thrive. Teachers plan to create developmentally appropriate experiences that focus on the developmental needs of the individual children, as well as the group, and that are embedded in the children's interests. We desire to partner with you regarding your child's care and education. Please take the time to communicate daily with the teaching staff regarding goals you may have for your child.

### Communication

Communication is a critical component of a quality programme. Please watch for announcements through:

- when you check your child in/out
- E-mail (**please make sure we have an updated address for your family**)
- Seesaw
- Weekly Newsletter

Children's Daily Forms/Chart Sharing information is not always easy since parents and teachers are busy. If you have a concern or special insight that would help us with your child, please visit or email your child's teacher, call and leave a message, or drop a note for the Head of Pre-school at the Front Desk. This will make things go smoother for your child, you, and the pre-school. **Your input is very important and always welcomed.**

### Parent Teacher Conferences

The teaching staff works hard along with the support of the Head of Pre-school to observe, assess, and create developmentally appropriate experiences that meet the goals of your children. Twice a year we will hold Parent Teacher Conferences. Our expectation is that you partner with us, and attend the conference for your child/children in order to maximize your children's learning experience, and prepare them to enter grade school with the necessary school readiness skills.

### What to Expect at Your Parent Teacher Conference

Your child's teacher(s) will have compiled observations and an assessment portfolio individualized for your child, prepared for your conference. The assessment portfolio is updated monthly and emailed to you so you are always kept up to date about your child's development.

- The teacher(s) will begin the conference by asking if you have any questions regarding your child's development, so he/s he can best know what areas of development to focus on.
- The teacher(s) will then proceed to go over those areas of development, highlighting strengths and areas of growth, as well as next steps individualised for your child.
- The teacher(s) will also present photo documentation of your child's development, creative artwork, and writing samples.
- 
- Before the conference concludes, you and your child's teacher(s) will set goals, and discuss areas that you would like to focus on for the remainder of your time in our programme, both at school and at home.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Toileting

When the parents and staff feel a child is ready, they will work together to create a supportive, positive approach to toileting. Older children are encouraged to use the toilet several times a day. The routine helps the younger children realize what is being asked of them. We never force a child to sit on the toilet. Our bathroom is an 'Open Bathroom' where the children use the toilet together. If a child asks to use the bathroom alone then staff stand with their backs to the child to give them privacy.

### Hand Washing

All staff and children are required to wash their hands upon entering our classrooms. When you and your child arrive at school, please assist your child in this procedure. We require the children to wash their hands often at school. This enables us to decrease the exposure to communicable diseases.

Children and staff wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- Before and after meals and snacks, including bottles
- Before and after administering medication
- After using the bathroom, assisting with toileting, or diapering
- After outdoor play
- After playing with or handling animals
- After cleaning or taking out garbage
- After coming into contact with bodily fluids including breast milk
- Before and after using sensory tables
- Any time hands are visibly soiled

### Rest Time

We provide mats for all children. While all children may not sleep, they are all required to rest during this time as sleep is a natural by-product of rest. Please do not request for child to be kept awake during this time, as it is healthy for children to sleep if they are tired, even a rest rejuvenates them for the continuation of their day. We ask that there are no drop-offs or pick-ups between the hours of 12:30pm-1:30pm, as this time is critical in easing the children into a restful state. Parents may enter the room but are reminded that any loud disturbances may wake the children. Blankets and soft toys must be taken home and washed weekly. After a period of rest for all children, the non-sleeping children will have the opportunity to engage in quiet and sensory play.

### Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is part of the early childhood curriculum. Your child will need to come with sunscreen already applied and the teachers will reapply as the day progresses. We will go outside every day except in the following cases:

- When there is a dangerous level of haze
- During active precipitation all children will go to the sensory play area

We encourage toys to stay home unless needed for the following:

- Comfort item to assist children with transitions
- Show and Tell in your child's classroom (Please check with the teacher)
- One soft sleeping toy (must be able to fit in child's cubby)

### Daily Schedule

Your child's classroom schedule is placed on the board for all to view. We do our best to maintain flexibility within the schedule to make sure we are following the child's lead and accommodating their needs. Each individual classroom has an area where the schedule, and any changes that will be made to the routine or environment are posted. Please note when your child will be doing certain activities. This will enable you to talk with your child regarding what they did at school.

## TRANSITIONS

### Home to School

It can be difficult for both parents and children to start in a new Pre-school or classroom. Here are some tips on how to help:

- **Allow time for hellos and goodbyes.** At the beginning of the semester, you can expect some children to have difficulty with separation. Allow time for transitions from home to school by staying for a few minutes to help your child ease into an activity.
- **Reminders of home** can be helpful as well. Invite your child to bring a special object such as a stuffed animal or blanket for rest time. Bringing in a family picture to display in your child's classroom is another way to ease the transition.
- **Please do not sneak away when your child is distracted.** This can make transitions even more difficult and promotes mistrust. As the parent, it is important to be as calm and relaxed as possible. If you are nervous about leaving your child, or in a hurry to leave, it will make your child feel more anxious and uneasy about the transition. Tell your child goodbye and reassure them that you will be back.
- **The teachers are there to help make it easier on you.** You can be assured that your child's teachers will be there to comfort your child and provide activities to ease their transition.

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- **New Classroom** Transitions are based on the child's age and personal readiness. We do not automatically move a child into a new classroom on their birthday. We also cannot guarantee there will be slots available in the next class when your child has a birthday. Your child will change classes when they are personally ready and space is available.

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

#### Fire Drill, Evacuation and Invacuation

Fire drills, evacuation and invacuation drills are conducted for everyone's protection. During these drills it is imperative that students remain silent, follow instructions given by the teacher, and carry out all directions in an orderly fashion. Parents visiting the school during a fire drill are expected to participate and evacuate the building by following instructions.

#### Emergency Drills

We are required by law to do fire drills at least once every six months. Fire drills are held on random days and times. We practice evacuating the classrooms, meeting on the playground, accounting for all staff and children, etc. We discuss the importance of the drills with the children and talk about any fears they may have.

#### Evacuation Procedures

If we are advised to evacuate the building because it is deemed unsafe for us to remain in our space, we will gather in the front car park.

### HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

#### Special Diet

It is your responsibility to notify the pre-school if your child has a known food allergy and/or a specific diet. Please give us or fax us a doctor's signed statement to put in your child's file.

In order for your child to attend SMMIS pre-school, he/she must be well enough to eat the meals from home and snacks provided by the center. They must also be able to go outdoors. If your child exhibits symptoms of illness (**fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, frequent cough, heavily running nose, frequent sneezing, unknown rash, Conjunctivitis (pink eye) etc.**) during the 24-hour period prior to scheduled attendance at the center, your child **should be kept home** until the symptoms mentioned have disappeared or a note is obtained from your physician stating that your child does not have a contagious condition. Children must wait 24 hours after the last fever, vomiting and diarrhea episode. Please note with Conjunctivitis your child cannot attend the centre until he/she has been on medication for 48 hours.

#### Sick Child Pick-up

Children who are mildly ill and do not exhibit any of the following conditions may attend. Children must be able to participate in activities (which includes outside time, as well as gross movement activities.)

If children develop any symptoms while at SMMIS Pre-school, the child will be separated from the other children and parents will be contacted. Arrangements should be made to pick-up children as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached within 15 minutes, an authorized person from the registration forms will be called to pick up your child. Please make sure your registration forms are updated.

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### Injuries

Every effort is made to keep your child safe; however, children are likely to acquire bumps, bruises, and scratches during their early years. An "Accident/Incident Report" will be filled out and will be placed in your child's file. All injuries will be notified by phone and or email. If, in the opinion of our staff on duty, the injury warrants emergency treatment, an ambulance will be called and your child will be taken to the nearest medical facility (Primary Children's Hospital). You will then be notified immediately. Parents will be responsible for any costs incurred due to any emergency treatment.

### Medication

If your child does have an illness that requires medication, the following policy will be in place. No over-the-counter medicine will be dispensed except for diaper rash ointments, teething gel and sunscreen. Many antibiotics and other medications can be administered 1 or 2 times per day. When visiting the doctor for your child's illness, please request a medication that can be administered in the morning before child care and the evening after leaving child care. In the event your child is placed on prescription medication that needs to be administered during the day the following will be applied:

- All medication must be given to a staff member upon arrival at the center and will be stored out of reach from children. No medications should be left in cubbies.
- Prescription medication must be in the original containers, with the child's full name, have the original pharmacy label and date clearly marked on the prescription. Must have a child safety cap.
- Medications must be accompanied with a medication permission form. No medication will be administered if there is not a current form signed with date and submitted.
- Medication will only be given by the director or director designee between 12:00 and 1:00. This coincides with lunch time. Other doses must be arranged to be given at home.

The school has the right to refuse admittance of a student if the director believes that such entry may cause further infection to others.

### Infectious or Contagious Diseases

The isolation periods for children suffering from such illnesses are given below and should be followed in all cases:

Illness	Incubation Period	Isolation of Student
Chickenpox	14-21 days	Until all scabs are dry
Fifth Disease (slapped cheek)	4-21 days	Not infectious after appearance of rash
German Measles	14-21 days	4 days from the appearance of rash
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	4-6 days	Until all sores have healed
Measles	10-14 days	4 days from the appearance of rash
Mumps	14-21 days	Several days after appearance of swelling

### Other childhood conditions

Illness	Isolation of Student
Conjunctivitis	Exclusion from school until eyes are back to normal
Head Lice	Exclusion from school until treatment has started
Impetigo	Exclusion from school until treatment has started
Verucca	Sores must be covered before participation in any aquatic activity

## Pre-School Parent Information Handbook 2021-22

### Immunisations

Your child must be up-to-date on immunisations as required prior to enrolment at the pre-school. After admission to the pre-school, you are responsible for regularly updating your child's health files to reflect current immunizations.

### Haze Action Plan

Singapore is subject to haze during the dry seasons in Sumatra and Borneo when the prevailing winds spread the smoke from ongoing forest fires across the region. SMMIS staff and families are advised to check on the PSI (Pollutants Standard Index) reading on <https://www.haze.gov.sg/#2>.

If the reading is at 300, school will not open that day. The buses will also check the reading and will not dispatch buses for pick up if the reading is 300 or above.

When the pre school is in session, the Head of Pre-School and Administration will access the PSI reading issued by the Ministry of Environment on a regular basis. The parents will be notified of any pertinent changes/updates/news.

PSI Reading	Air Quality	Action to be Taken
less than 50	Good	Operation will be as normal
50 -99	Moderate	Students with respiratory disorders or haze related symptoms (skin or eye irritations, sneezing, coughing) will be excused from outdoor activities and will remain indoors.
100 – 199	Unhealthy	Playground time will take place indoors in the gym.
200 – 299	Very unhealthy	All outdoor activities will be suspended. Indoor activities will not include physical exertion.
300 or above	Hazardous	If the first reading of the day is in this range, school will not open that day. Communication will be sent home to all parents and an announcement will be put on the school website.

## INFORMATION

### School Lunches and our Kashrut Policy

Breakfast will be provided between 8.00 am and 8.30 am consisting of toast, cereal milk or water to drink. Morning snack, consisting of fruit and/or vegetables, is sent from home and is served to the children with a drink of water at 9.30am. All children must bring their own water bottles (clearly labeled) to school. Parents provide morning snack for all children in Tiny Tots; Pre-Nursery and Nursery.

A hot, kosher lunch is provided at SMMIS. Nutritious and varied home cooked meals are prepared fresh in the building each morning. In addition, we provide a salad bar for our students to encourage healthy eating. It is important that your child has a full breakfast prior to his/her arrival at school. A copy of the menu will be e-mailed to you each week with the school Newsletter.

An afternoon snack is given to the children, usually fruit, and is provided by the school.

As a community school serving the entire Singapore Jewish Community, we are sensitive to the needs of all our families. Therefore, it is a strict school policy that no food is to be brought into school from home (for meals, snacks, birthdays etc).

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We have a number of students at SMMIS who have life threatening allergies to nuts and all nut products, even coming into physical contact with any of these products. These children can go into anaphylactic shock that can result in death. Therefore, no nut products, including peanut butter, will be allowed on campus.

### Birthdays

Since birthdays are a happy time, we would like to make your child feel special on that day. For a minimal charge, the school will provide a kosher birthday cake, please ensure you give the kitchen a minimum of 5 day's notice. Please order your cake at [frontdesk@smm.edu.sg](mailto:frontdesk@smm.edu.sg).

Due to our kashrut requirements, no other sweets or snacks from outside should be brought in to the school. We encourage parents and siblings to celebrate their child's birthday with us at the classroom party.

### Party Invitations

If you wish to distribute your child's birthday party invitations at school, please ensure that all children are included. If more than half of the girls or half of the boys are invited to a party, all the girls or all the boys should be invited to the party.

Out of respect for those children who are Shomrei Shabbat, (Sabbath observant), parties should not be scheduled on Friday evenings or Saturday. Please ensure that food served at the parties is kosher.

### School Uniform

School uniform is available for students of Pre-Nursery and upwards. You can buy the school uniform at the Front Desk at the beginning of the year. It is also available throughout the school year.

**Tiny Tots** (uniform is optional)

#### Pre Nursery and Nursery

SMMIS Blue School Dress

SMMIS Blue Polo Shirt

Khaki Shorts

White Polo Shirt for Friday

If girls are wearing leggings they must be navy or black

Closed shoes (no sandals and no shoes with lights)

On Friday, for Kabbalat Shabbat, students of Tiny Tots to K2 are allowed to dress in smart clothes in respect for the spirit of welcoming the Shabbat. Denim jeans, shabby shoes and t-shirts of any kind are not permitted.

### Field Trips

- Field trips and walks away from SMMIS pre-school are a part of the curriculum. Children enjoy the opportunity to explore and learn from the resources throughout the community.
- Methods of transportation include the private buses, and walking.
- For all fieldtrips, an email will be sent notifying parents of the date, time, destination, and means of transportation at least 3 days in advance.

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- Written parental permission is required before your child may participate in any field trip.
- All fieldtrips are approved by the Head of Pre-school and are planned to ensure a positive experience for the children at SMMIS preschool.

### Photographs & Media

SMMIS pre-school staff will use the preschools ipad to document children's activities. These photos are primarily used to document your child's progress and may be hung up for view in the pre-school. You will receive a release form during the registration process, granting or declining permission to SMMIS pre-school and all staff to use still, motion, video or audio recording of your child's image for use in conjunction with the production of visual bulletin boards, social media or other educational purposes.

### Change of Address and Phone Numbers

**If your address or phone number changes, please inform Front Desk ([frontdesk@smm.edu.sg](mailto:frontdesk@smm.edu.sg)) immediately.** If we do not have the current phone number, it is difficult to notify you should an emergency occur.

### Volunteer Policy

Families are always welcome and encouraged to volunteer and spend time in the classrooms. We ask that families assist the teaching staff in promoting our programme policies and mission. Disciplining of any child, including that family's child, must be left up to the teaching staff in order to ensure consistency with our positive guidance policy. In the event a family is inappropriate in the classroom, or is not following programme policies, they may be asked to immediately leave the classroom, and this will be left up to the Head of Pre-school's discretion.

#### **Ways for families to help out include:**

- Volunteering in the classroom – make sure to coordinate with your child(ren)'s teacher(s) to ensure that you have something to do while in the classroom (reading to the children, working on a project, helping with a walking field trip, etc.)
- Making things like play dough, cooking, etc. for your child(ren)'s classroom
- Donating items (recyclables, anything that could be used for art and craft, etc.)
- Kabbalat Shabbat

### Visitors to the School

For the safety of our students, all visitors must sign in at the Main Gate and wear a visitor's badge before entering the campus during class hours.

Please do not walk onto campus because you think everyone knows you – not everyone does, especially the students, and they are looking for a visitor badge on anyone they do not know.

Classroom time is precious and therefore cannot be compromised. To ensure the confidentiality of our students and to prevent unnecessary distractions, visits during class instruction time are not allowed.

The only student visitors allowed are those considering possible enrolment.





**SIR  
MANASSEH  
MEYER**  
International School

**SMMIS Home-School Agreement for \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name)**

The values of SMMIS, shine through all that we do. We promote excellence in all of our students: teachers, children and parents work in partnership so that every child can realise their unique potential. Students will leave SMMIS as responsible and communally active young adults, numerate and literate, with a love of learning and proud of their identity as International and Jewish citizens. Our curriculum and Jewish Education programme, inside the classroom and beyond, encourages all students to make informed choices about their lives.

	<b>As a Student, I will</b>	<b>As a Parent, I/we will</b>	<b>As a School, we will</b>
<b>Ethos</b>	Be kind and speak politely to everyone in school. Respect other children and all school staff. Respect and care for the School and the local community. Respect the Jewish beliefs and practices of the whole SMMIS community. Follow all requests at the first time of asking. Keep hands and hurtful comments to myself. Respect the rights and property of others. Respect the school's kashrut policy. Accept responsibility for the things that I do.	Support and celebrate the school's ethos and respect the Jewish beliefs and practices of others. Support the school's Behaviour Policy and avoid criticising the school in front of students. Encourage a positive attitude towards my child's education and our school. If I have any concerns I will come and discuss them with you. Support the school's kashrut policy.	Ensure that the Jewish beliefs and practices of the community are taught in an inclusive and respectful way. Provide a safe and positive learning environment. Set clear expectations for behaviour, punctuality and attendance. Teach your child to develop a positive attitude to those around them regardless of gender, race, culture, belief, values, age and need.
<b>Learning</b>	Be actively involved in all aspects of school life. Try my best in all that I do.	Attend meetings, events and parents' evenings where relevant. Help my child to learn.	Provide an outstanding, inclusive, broad and balanced education. Ensure that our learning environment is stimulating and challenging. Celebrate your child's academic and personal achievements.
<b>Beyond the Classroom</b>	Respect and represent the school with pride, decency and integrity at all times, including on the journey to and from school. Take care of the building, equipment and resources.	Encourage my child to be a thoughtful, moral and proud member of the SMMIS and wider community.	Provide a range of activities which enrich and develop learning beyond the classroom. Provide guidance to students. Care for your child's safety and well-being by observation and listening.
<b>Homework and equipment</b>	Be responsible for my school and homework. Work hard and be organised in completing home learning to meet deadlines reliably. Wear the correct uniform and have the correct kit and equipment.	Support children with their homework. Ensure that my child's homework is completed on time. Ensure that my child has the correct uniform and kit/equipment.	Set and mark homework regularly and effectively ensuring that it is differentiated and achievable. Ensure the learning environment is equipped and resourced. Clear information will be provided to enable you to assist your child.
<b>Attendance and Punctuality</b>	Be punctual to school and to lessons. Attend school to the best of my ability.	Ensure that my child attends school punctually and regularly. Inform the school of any absences and request 'known absences' in advance.	Inform parents of any unexplained absences and provide attendance figures on request and in reports.

**Pre-School Parent Information Handbook 2021-22**

<b>Communication</b>	<p>Speak to my teacher or another member of staff if I have a difficulty.          Ask for help if I need it.          Tell a member of staff if I am worried or unhappy.          Ensure that all communications are taken home.</p>	<p>Inform the school via their teacher about all relevant matters of concern at the earliest opportunity.          Read all communication sent by the school and respond promptly where relevant.          Communicate with school staff in a respectful and courteous manner.</p>	<p>Ensure that parents and carers receive regular reports on student progress via formal reports, letters, newsletters, ICT, meetings.          Provide clear information and encouragement to students regarding progress and attainment through written reports, shared targets and coaching and other opportunities.          We will celebrate your child's success and explain how we can support them in their areas for development.          Respond to parental concerns promptly and effectively.</p>
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Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Student)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Parent)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Elaine Robinson  
 (Prinicpal)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Sam Sassoon  
 (Chair of Trustees)**

Date:

## REVISION TABLE

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
00	Initial Release	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
01	Update uniform	26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2021