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[info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com), [www.talmudtorah.com](http://www.talmudtorah.com)

# Parent Handbook

## 2019-20



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# VTT's Mission, Vision and Values

“And you shall teach your children diligently”

– Deuteronomy 6:7

Vancouver Talmud Torah is an inclusive Jewish community day school committed to academic excellence and nurturing lifelong learners who engage the world through Jewish traditions and values.

## VISION

**FAMILIES** in Greater Vancouver will recognize VTT as the premiere Jewish day school for students from a broad spectrum of Jewish practice and belief.

**THE JEWISH COMMUNITY** in Vancouver will recognize VTT as a partner in educating Jewish students and an integral part of the fabric of Jewish life in the community.

**THE GREATER VANCOUVER COMMUNITY** will recognize the active role VTT plays as a contributor to social justice in the community, across Canada, and around the world.

## VALUES

Vancouver Talmud Torah is committed to academic excellence, community, inclusivity, Jewish peoplehood, Israel and social responsibility.

**ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.** We teach independent and collaborative learning, core skills, critical thinking, and creative thought. We set high standards for our learners and educators that permeate the general, Judaic, arts, and athletics curricula. *Limmud* means that we have rigorous expectations and have the ability to meet individual needs, as exemplified through the study of Torah.

{לימוד}

**COMMUNITY.** We build a strong community of learners, families, educators, and staff. Children actively engage in an educational atmosphere conducive to their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Teachers and families work together for the benefit of students. *K'hillah kedoshah* means that every member of the VTT family is valued.

{קהילה קדושה}

**INCLUSIVITY.** We value every learner, and recognize that their diverse learning styles, religious observance, family composition, and economic background, are an asset to our school community. *Kavod* means that everyone at VTT, regardless of their origin, is deserving of honour and respect.

{כבוד}

**JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD.** We foster a connection between our school community and Jews around the world. *K'lal Yisrael* means celebrating varied experiences and traditions of the Jewish people.

{כלל ישראל}

**ISRAEL.** We create formative experiences for learners to connect to the Jewish State, as we encourage thoughtful engagement and foster a deep love for Israel, the Hebrew language, and our Jewish heritage. *Ahavat Yisrael* means that each of us is responsible for forging a meaningful relationship with Israel. {אהבת ישראל}

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.** We engage in social justice by learning about community needs, studying them through a Jewish lens, and addressing them through concrete action. *Tikkun olam* means that the school community, and each person in it, embodies social responsibility through the ethical teachings of our tradition. {תיקון עולם}



# Leadership at VTT



The VTT leadership team is led by Head of School, Emily Greenberg, who is responsible for maintaining and enhancing academic excellence, including innovations to programming and curricula; maintaining and enhancing operational excellence in both general and Judaic studies, with an eye to fiscal prudence and sustainability; executing policies set by the Board of Directors; and implementing the mission and mandate of the school. Specifically, the Head of School is responsible for educational management, instructional leadership, Ministry of Education requirements, board, community and stakeholder relations, human resources, financial management, development and fundraising, and public relations.

The Head of School is supported in her role by the leadership team.

Emily Greenberg, B.Ed., M.Sc., Head of School

Leigh Ariel, M.Ed., Principal of Primary

Adam Gelmon, M.Ed., Principal of Intermediate

Ellen Wiesenthal, M.Ed., Head of Jewish Life & Learning

Lyora Nifco, ECE, Early Childhood Director

Neville Lok, CA/CPA, CFO

Jennifer Shecter-Balin, M.Ed., Director of Admissions and Communications

Marko Milisavljevic, Director of Information Technology

Shane Foxman, Associate Director of Advancement

To see a complete list of VTT's faculty and staff for the 2019-20 school year, visit  
[talmudtorah.com/staff-directory/](http://talmudtorah.com/staff-directory/).

The formula to email any staff member is a person's first initial last name [@talmudtorah.com](mailto:initiallastname@talmudtorah.com)

# Board of Directors

VTT's Board of Directors has a duty to provide oversight and direction in the fulfillment of the school's mission to ensure its long-term success and sustainability.

VTT is a close-knit community of many stakeholders and supporters. These include students, parents, grandparents, alumni, faculty, staff, the leadership team, board members, committee members, donors, vendors and other community organizations/leaders. VTT's Board of Directors gives voice to all of these stakeholders by ensuring that diverse needs, opinions and thoughts are considered with respect to the school's strategic direction and by providing governance and oversight with respect to many aspects of the school, including finance, operations, community engagement and more. The Board's primary focus is on **strategic planning and providing oversight and support to the leadership team**, as they continue to deliver educational and operational excellence, financial stability and sustainability and meet the needs of the entire community.

The Board is structured by portfolio in order to support the leadership team's role in effectively dealing with the complexities of running Western Canada's largest Jewish elementary day school and the requirements of 21st century learning. The portfolio structure also enables more stakeholders to be directly engaged. Each portfolio chair (or co-chair) oversees a committee consisting of both board and non-board members, that meets regularly to define goals and work with the leadership team, faculty and staff to implement strategies. Each committee makes monthly reports to the entire Board and important issues are discussed and voted on.

Updates on the Board's work are primarily communicated through the Stakeholders' Report. Some Board updates are noted in the weekly Hadashot, and a more formal presentation of the financial position of VTT, along with the election of the new Board, takes place at the Annual General Meeting each fall.

The VTT Board places much emphasis on continuity and succession planning, to ensure seamless transitions with incoming/outgoing board members each year, and most importantly, to retain institutional knowledge. Ideally, new board members are recruited through the committee structure – first by volunteering, then by chairing a committee and then by becoming a director on the Board itself.

Board recruitment is advertised in the spring in VTT's Hadashot e-newsletter as well as in The Jewish Independent.



# GOT A QUESTION? WE'VE GOT ANSWERS

Need help with the parent portal? Email [support@talmudtorah.com](mailto:support@talmudtorah.com)



There may be instances when parents need answers to a particular question, query or program. The charts on this page and the following page outline the chains of command parents should follow when seeking clarification or support.

## STEP I - GENERALLY, SPEAK TO THE CLASSROOM TEACHER FIRST

NATURE OF QUERY	Early Childhood	Primary (SK-3)	Intermediate (4-7)
Academic/Social Emotional	Classroom Teacher	General/Judaic Studies Teacher	Subject Teacher
Judaic Curriculum	Classroom Teacher	Judaic Studies Teacher	Judaic Studies Teacher
Special Education	Classroom Teacher	General/Judaic Studies Teacher	Subject Teacher
Safety and Security	Natalie Chark, Office Manager, <a href="mailto:nchark@talmudtorah.com">nchark@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Communications (non-academic matters)	Jennifer Shecter-Balin, Director of Communications, <a href="mailto:info@talmudtorah.com">info@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Lates and Absences/ School Uniforms	Natalie Chark, Office Manager, <a href="mailto:nchark@talmudtorah.com">nchark@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Financial	Michelle Mah, Accounting Manager, <a href="mailto:mmah@talmudtorah.com">mmah@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Admissions	Tammy Kalvari, Admissions Manager, <a href="mailto:tkalvari@talmudtorah.com">tkalvari@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Development	Shane Foxman, Associate Director of Development, <a href="mailto:sfoxman@talmudtorah.com">sfoxman@talmudtorah.com</a>		

## STEP II - APPROACH LEADERSHIP TEAM

NATURE OF QUERY	Early Childhood	Primary (SK-3)	Intermediate (4-7)
Academic/Social/ Emotional	Lyora Nifco, Early Childhood Director, <a href="mailto:lnifco@talmudtorah.com">lnifco@talmudtorah.com</a>	Leigh Ariel, Principal of Primary, <a href="mailto:lariel@talmudtorah.com">lariel@talmudtorah.com</a>	Adam Gelmon, Principal of Intermediate <a href="mailto:agelmon@talmudtorah.com">agelmon@talmudtorah.com</a>
Judaics Curriculum		Ellen Wiesenthal, Head of Jewish Life & Learning, <a href="mailto:ewiesenthal@talmudtorah.com">ewiesenthal@talmudtorah.com</a>	
Special Education	For Intermediate: Adam Gelmon, <a href="mailto:agelmon@talmudtorah.com">agelmon@talmudtorah.com</a> For Primary: Leigh Ariel, <a href="mailto:lariel@talmudtorah.com">lariel@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Safety & Security	Adam Gelmon, Principal of Intermediate: <a href="mailto:agelmon@talmudtorah.com">agelmon@talmudtorah.com</a>		
General Communications	Lyora Nifco, Early Childhood Director, <a href="mailto:lnifco@talmudtorah.com">lnifco@talmudtorah.com</a>	Leigh Ariel, Principal of Primary, <a href="mailto:lariel@talmudtorah.com">lariel@talmudtorah.com</a>	Adam Gelmon, Principal of Intermediate <a href="mailto:agelmon@talmudtorah.com">agelmon@talmudtorah.com</a>
Financial	Neville Lok, CFO, <a href="mailto:nlok@talmudtorah.com">nlok@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Admissions	Jennifer Shecter-Balin, Director of Admissions & Communications, <a href="mailto:info@talmudtorah.com">info@talmudtorah.com</a>		
Development	Emily Greenberg, Head of School, <a href="mailto:egreenberg@talmudtorah.com">egreenberg@talmudtorah.com</a>		

# Observance of Shabbat & Jewish Festivals

Our goal is to create an inclusive, supportive community regardless of one's level of observance. Respect of others is paramount.

Shabbat is sacred time during the Jewish week and is differentiated from “secular” or “mundane” time. In order to allow all of our families to observe Shabbat to their own levels of preference, the following school-level policies are in place:

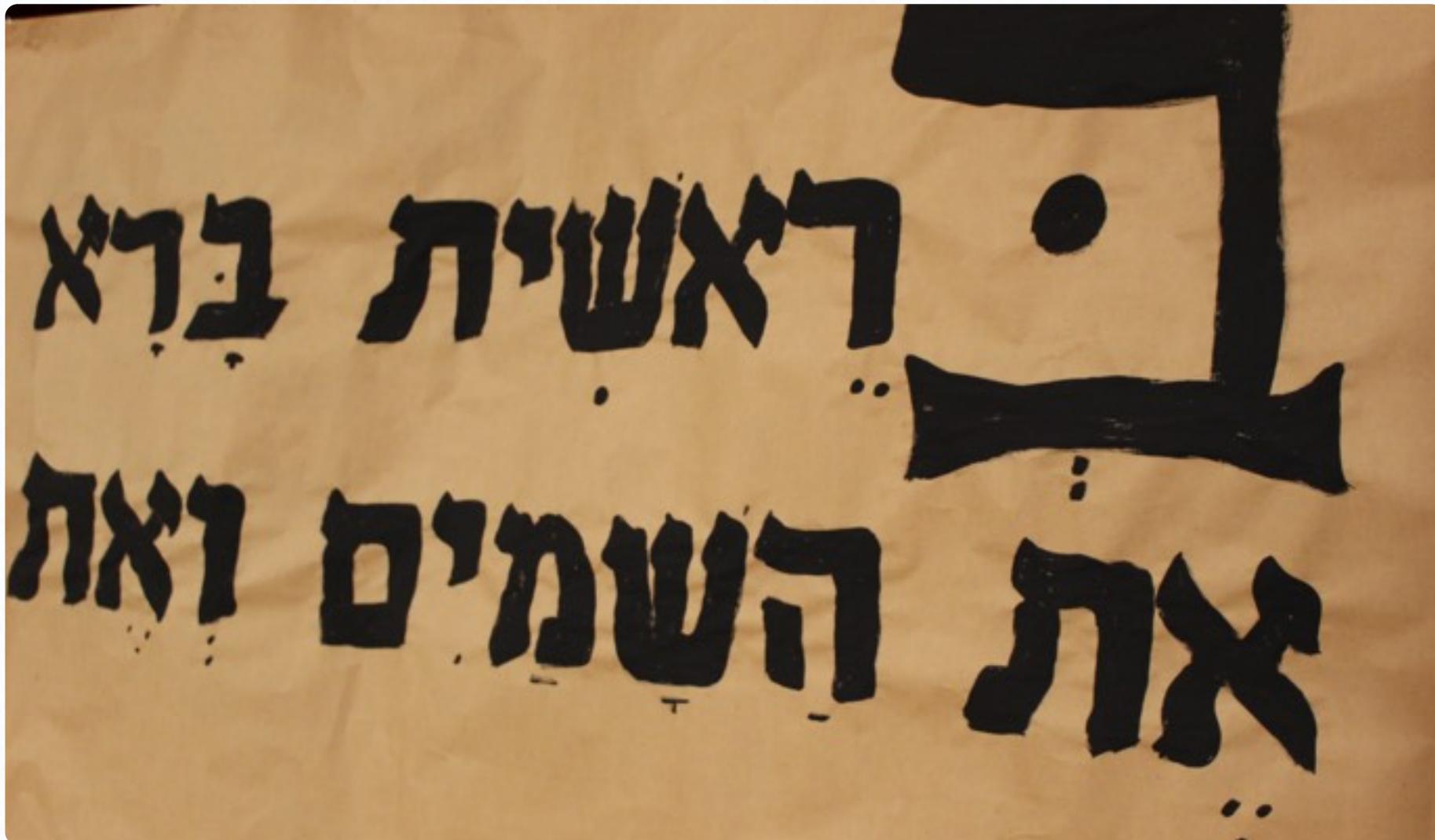
- ◆ Homework assignments of any kind may not be assigned over Shabbat and festivals.
- ◆ Tests or other assignments may not be made due on the day immediately following a festival observance, nor may they be assigned over the course of the Pesach/Passover recess.

Additionally, we strongly encourage all of our families to refrain from having their children's birthday parties on Shabbat or other festivals. We also encourage families to schedule B'nei Mitzvah parties to begin after the conclusion of Shabbat if held on a Saturday night. By ensuring that we honour all levels of observance in our school, we are continuing to build and foster an inclusive community.

Please respect Shabbat and do not email or contact VTT faculty, staff and the leadership team over the Sabbath. Emails sent over Shabbat and other Jewish holidays will be responded to after the conclusion of Shabbat or holy days/yom tovim.



# Religious Policies



Vancouver Talmud Torah is a community Jewish day school that respects and embraces variation in observance and religious practice. As such, we serve a community of families that reflects a wide spectrum of beliefs and ritual practices. The leaders and teachers of Vancouver Talmud Torah serve as role models for the value of pluralism and for active engagement in Jewish life and living, which we hope to inspire in our students and families as a result of their being a part of the VTT community. “Pluralism” refers to a community that fosters respect for each individual’s background and builds a safe and comfortable environment in which it can be discussed. Therefore, our classrooms and other teaching spaces should be places where teachers and students are able to express personal opinions and engage in conversation. Care must be taken to always bear in mind that all opinions are welcome, as is open discourse and respect for others. Consequently, there may not be “one right

answer.” Our success in helping our community to grow and learn on an on-going basis will be founded on these ideas and practices.

There are some religious policies upon which our community is founded in order to help build a religious and spiritual community that will be comfortable for all and respectful of tradition and traditional observances:

## **1. Observance of Kashrut/Jewish Dietary Laws**

The Jewish dietary laws are one of the ways that we elevate the mundane act of eating and connect it to G-d and holiness. They also add an aspect of religious discipline to everyday Jewish life. As a community, VTT observes the laws of Kashrut within the school in the following ways:

- ✓ Students may only bring dairy or *pareve* foods (items that are neither meat nor dairy, such as fish, fruits and vegetables) to school for lunches and snacks.
- ✓ Food items brought into the school for celebrations or activities must bear a certified kosher label (see some examples below) or must have been prepared in the school's kitchen. We ask that parents refrain from providing treats for birthdays. **Unfortunately, we do not permit home-baked goods to be brought into the school for such events.**

There are a number of internationally recognized *hekhsherim*/kosher certification labels. Please note, however, that a **generic stand-alone “K” is not an acceptable kosher certification, unless it has been pre-approved by the Judaic studies administration.** Some of the most common *hekhsherim*/kosher certification labels are:



## 2. Secular Calendar Holidays

As a community Jewish day school serving a diverse population, our students will express varied levels of knowledge about, and interest in, holidays and observances from outside of Judaism. While individual students and their families will make their own choices regarding how to approach such events, VTT encourages active participation in the festivals and celebrations of the Jewish calendar and discourages par-

ticipation in secular ones, particularly those with their roots in other religious traditions. Observances that are associated with Halloween and Saint Valentine's Day, for example, are not permitted to take place within the school.

## 3. The Wearing of Kippot

Wearing a *kippah* or traditional head-covering, while not a commandment, has been a traditional observance for the Jewish people for centuries. It is both a sign of respect for and awareness of G-d's presence and a tangible identifier of one's Jewish identity. As VTT is a house of Torah study and a setting for the performance of *mitzvot*/commandments on a daily basis, all Jewish males are required to wear a *kippah* while in the building. Please ensure your son comes to school with a *kippah* daily. Store extra ones in his locker or backpack in case of loss. **This is a mandatory part of the school uniform and all families are expected to comply with this expectation.**

While the wearing of a *kippah* has not been practiced by women until more recent generations, there have been several head covering traditions for women throughout Jewish history. As a community Jewish day school, we support our female students and faculty should they choose to wear a *kippah* or traditional Jewish head covering, particularly during Torah study, prayer, and meal times.



# Admissions

Our graduates leave VTT with a strong sense of who they are, their obligation to contribute to tikkun olam, and the capacity to think critically and deeply about the issues confronting them.



All applications to the school are carefully screened and reviewed to ensure fit for the student and fit with the school. In addition to a completed application, the admissions committee relies on report cards, transcripts, teacher feedback from prior schools (when we receive a Consent for Release of Information form), and other assessments to make a determination. As much as we would like to accommodate

all families, many factors affect admissions. **Vancouver Talmud Torah cannot guarantee acceptance for any applicant.**

All documentation must be accompanied by a \$100 per student non-refundable application fee. Enrollment links will be given to the applicant family with the understanding that ac-

ceptance is pending based on the school's receipt of all necessary documentation and the assessed fit of the student.

Following receipt of the necessary documentation, if there are concerns as to whether or not Vancouver Talmud Torah can meet the student's academic needs, follow-up assessments may be performed by the learning assistance teachers in English and/or in Hebrew. If the concerns are related to social and/or behavioural issues, a school administrator will gather all necessary information from the relevant external professionals involved with the student (i.e., previous school, counsellor, psychologist, etc.).

After gathering all pertinent information, the Director of Admissions and the admissions team will meet to share information and make a decision regarding acceptance.

Acceptances will either be emailed or communicated by phone. A member of the admissions team or specialist teacher will meet with the family on the student's first day of school and will escort the student to his/her class. The admissions team consists of the Director of Admissions, Admissions Manager, Division Principals and Head of School.

## NEW STUDENT APPLICATIONS

For each new student, a completed online application, report cards from the last two years, academic and/or psychological assessments, birth certificate, and proof of parents' legal status in Canada (if not born in Canada) must be submitted before enrollment can take place. Online inquiries can be made by going to [inquire.talmudtorah.com](http://inquire.talmudtorah.com).

Every student, including continuing students, must be enrolled for each new school year. The procedure involves:

1. Completion and submission of online enrollment form and enrollment contract (one per student).
2. Payment of non-refundable enrollment deposit and post-dated Parent Action Chavurah (PAC) fee of \$300. (Will not be cashed if **12 volunteer hours** are completed each year.)
3. Completion and submission of online consent forms.
4. Completion and submission of online enrollment contract.
5. Submission of post-dated tuition cheques.
6. Completion and submission of other documentation as requested.

**Enrollment is not considered complete until all six steps have been finalized.**

For each student enrolling for Rishonim or Junior Kindergarten, a non-refundable, non-transferable deposit is levied at the time of enrollment. This deposit will be applied against the total tuition fees.

**NOTE: Enrollments will not be accepted from families with tuition assessments in arrears or other outstanding debts to the school. Also, students will NOT be admitted to class in September unless the above procedures are completed in their entirety.**

## TUITION ASSESSMENTS (FINANCIAL AID)

Tuition assessments for Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7 are determined by clearly defined criteria, which is sent to all families at the time of enrollment, and is also readily available through our VTT finance office. Please contact our finance office at 604.736.7307, ext. 3408, for further details.

1. Completion and submission of online enrollment, consent forms and enrollment contract.
2. Payment of non-refundable enrollment deposit and post-dated Parent Action Chavurah (PAC) fee of \$300. (Will not be cashed if **12 volunteer hours** are completed each year.)
3. Submission of full set of post-dated cheques or credit card information.

**Enrollment is not considered complete until all three steps have been finalized.**

## GRADE 7 GRADUATION FEE

A levy of \$140.00, payable at time of enrollment will be made for each student entering Grade 7 to cover the graduation ceremony expenses.

## NSF CHEQUES

A fee of \$35.00 to cover costs will be charged for each cheque returned by the bank.

## WITHDRAWALS

VTT must budget, plan, and make contractually binding commitments months in advance of the commencement of the school year to fulfill its obligations to all students and parents. Thus, a withdrawal of any student from enrollment after acceptance may, depending on the timing, result in VTT being unable to fill the vacancy created by such withdrawal or in VTT having incurred costs and expenses in anticipation of the attendance of one's child(ren) for the school year in question. If a family elects **for any reason** to withdraw their child(ren), whether prior to the beginning of classes or after classes have commenced, no portion of the deposit, tuition or other fees paid or owing to VTT will be refunded or waived, including expulsion from VTT. Parents are liable for full tuition and related fees, including any interest payable on overdue accounts. Please note the the Enrollment Contract is a legal document and supercedes and replaces any prior agreements or representations, whether oral or written.

## CLASS PLACEMENTS

Teachers, with the guidance of the leadership team, are responsible for placing students in classes. A number of factors are taken into account in compiling our class lists, including:

- ✓ academic balance
- ✓ gender balance
- ✓ balance of special needs (behaviour, English language acquisition)
- ✓ consideration of friendships

Although work on class placements is done in June, we do not announce the specific placement of children until the end of August by electronic mail. This is owing to the fact that often adjustments have to be made to room assignments prior to school opening. Sometimes decisions are made to create additional classes; sometimes it is necessary to change teacher assignments. This is a very complex process and consequently we cannot entertain requests for class changes.

The above information is intended to help parents to understand the school's practice regarding placement of students. **The paramount consideration is to provide the best situation for all of our students.**

## CLASS LISTS

Due to federal privacy legislation, class lists are no longer distributed to families. With appropriate consent, parent grade representatives will share **grade email lists only** for playdates and party invitations. **VTT does not distribute home addresses or telephone numbers.**



# Student Progress, Parent Teacher Conferences, Homework

Report cards are published in the on-line parent portal at [parents.talmudtorah.com](https://parents.talmudtorah.com) three times a year. The grading scale is based on Ministry of Education requirements.



Parents are informed of their children's progress by means of three written report cards, two progress reports in the intermediate grade as well as by parent-teacher contact.

## CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Conferences may be arranged at any time during the year with teachers or the leadership team. **The teacher must be the first point of reference and contact for all student concerns.** To schedule a meeting, parents should email the teacher, which will

be returned within 24 hours or earlier (except if sent on Shabbat). Parents may also be contacted to meet with faculty members if there is a need concerning a student's progress (i.e. team meetings, etc.).

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework cannot be assigned over Shabbat and/or Jewish holidays and will typically be given Monday through Thursday.

### **Homework in the Primary Grades:**

Home reading is essential to literacy development in the primary grades.

#### **Grades 1 and 2:**

Homework activities are intended to support learning to read and should be a maximum of 10 to 15 minutes in duration combined from both general and Judaic studies.

#### **Grade 3:**

A combination of independent and parent/child literacy-based activities should occur. These activities take approximately 20 minutes (general and Judaic).

### **Homework in the Intermediate Grades:**

As students move into the intermediate program, reading is no longer considered homework, but is expected in order to support their ongoing development of literacy skills.

#### **Grades 4 and 5:**

Approximately 30 minutes (general and Judaics) of work is given.

#### **Grades 6 and 7:**

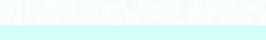
At the Grade 6/7 level, homework should not exceed more than 60 minutes per evening.

Students in these grades will be assigned longer-term projects over the weekend, but they will be given ample notice and teachers will ensure collaboration in the assignment of these projects.

Following missed classes, there may be instances where more work is required at home.

**VTT discourages parents from taking students out of school for extended vacations. In the event that families choose to take such vacations, teachers are not responsible for preparing special lessons and homework in advance. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure completion of assignments and the student's responsibility to complete assignments and catch up.**

As a parent, you can help stimulate your child's curiosity and delight in learning. You can also help extend and reinforce at home what they learn at school. **Take an active interest in your child's homework and encourage him/her to develop healthy attitudes and efficient habits regarding homework and studying.** The following suggestions may be helpful:



- ✓ Provide your child with a fixed place to study and to do his/her homework. It should be quiet, well lit and free of distractions and supplied with paper, pencils, appropriate reference materials, etc.

- ✓ Help him/her to set a regular homework time each day and stick to it, free from any other distractions or interruptions. Do provide playtime after school and before homework time.

- ✓ Provide a special notebook for recording his/her homework assignments as follows: Homework Given, Date Due, Homework Finished.

- ✓ Encourage your child to take an occasional break when studying. Research has shown that short concentrated periods of studying, with breaks for relaxation, help the student towards maximum retention of academic material.

- ✓ Help your child to find additional sources of information besides school textbooks. Make family trips to the public library and help your child find books, pamphlets, magazines and even people in the community who might be experts on a topic.

- ✓ Help your child organize and budget time, especially to meet deadlines for long-term assignments such as reports and projects. One method is to develop a chart, which lists all the steps necessary to complete the project; this makes a large task look manageable and possible.

- ✓ Remember that homework is assigned to the student, not to you. The child who has a parent hovering over his shoulder will develop a fear of making mistakes that will hamper his/her creativity and ability to attempt new tasks. Let your child know you expect them to do their best but not perfect work. Remind him/her to check over their work and you can assist by asking questions and reviewing parts that may seem confusing.

- ✓ Remember that praise and encouragement are more productive than criticism. Look for things to praise: a neatly written paper, an improvement in spelling, a completed assignment, etc.



## PRIMARY (SK-3) ASSESSMENT SCALE

### **Emerging**

- The work does not meet grade level expectations
- There is little evidence of progress toward the relevant prescribed learning outcomes
- The situation needs intervention

### **Developing**

- The work may be inconsistent, but meets grade level expectations
- There is evidence of progress toward the relevant prescribed learning outcomes
- The student needs support in identified areas

### **Proficient**

- The work meets grade level expectations
- There is evidence that relevant prescribed learning outcomes have been accomplished

### **Mastering**

- The work consistently meets grade level expectations
- There is consistent evidence that relevant prescribed learning outcomes have been accomplished

### **N/A**

- Not applicable

### **I**

- In progress/Incomplete

Letter Indicator	Intermediate Assessment Indicator Descriptor (4-7)	Letter Indicator	Intermediate Assessment Indicator Descriptor (4-7)
<b>A</b>	The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.	<b>C</b>	The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
<b>B+</b>	The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.	<b>C-</b>	The student is experiencing difficulty in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
<b>B</b>	The student demonstrates good performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.	<b>I</b>	<b>In Progress or Incomplete:</b> The student, for specifically identified reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade due to incomplete work or work in progress. When the required work is completed, a performance level indicator or grade will be assigned.
<b>C+</b>	The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.	<b>F</b>	<b>Failed or Failing:</b> The student has not demonstrated minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. The letter grade "F" may only be assigned if an "I" letter grade has been previously assigned for that course or subject and grade.

# Conduct & Discipline Policy

VTT promotes a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Students and parents are expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, parents, teachers, school staff and visitors.



## POLICY STATEMENT

The school's rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and maintain order in the school.

Those who violate the rights of others or who violate school rules will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary measures. Such measures are designed to correct, promote and rehabilitate. All written disciplinary actions will be recorded in the student's file.

## Reason for Policy

Students, parents, teachers, school staff and visitors have a right to a healthy and safe school environment. This policy will aid us to communicate the school's rules of conduct and discipline regarding behaviour, attitudes and safety with our students and families.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Parents

Parents are responsible for abiding by all policies and procedures while in or representing VTT. Parents are expected to work in respectful partnership with all members of the school community. Thoughtful, respectful communication with faculty, school leadership, staff, administration and other parents is essential to student success. **The consequences for not acting in accordance with this Code of Conduct include revoking privileges, discharge from the school, and non re-enrollment of family for subsequent school years. Please see our link to our Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy:**

<http://storage.talmudtorah.com/harassment.pdf>

Should you have a question or concern about your child, please contact your child's teacher(s). Should you contact another staff member before the classroom teacher, you will be redirected to the teacher as s/he is the most appropriate point of first contact.

Confidentiality is crucial to creating a safe, trusting and respectful school environment. All parents are expected to treat sensitive, personal information with the utmost care and confidentiality.

### Students

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment at school or school-related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time (see VTT Code of Conduct Appendix #1 – Elementary School Lateness).
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being appropriately dressed in school uniform and groomed.
4. Showing courtesy and respect toward others and behaving in a responsible manner.
5. Avoiding violations of the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and always exercising self-discipline and obeying all school rules, including safety rules.
6. Cooperating with any investigation of Code of Conduct cases and volunteering known information relating to a serious offence.

The school has authority over students during the regular school day, during recess, lunch periods, during field trips and VTT sponsored outings, and while going to and from school on school transportation. This jurisdiction includes any activity during the school day on school grounds and attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location. If an incident occurs outside of school hours, or off school premises, and it has a direct impact on VTT students and/or staff, the school will assume authority over such incidents.

Elementary school students are not allowed to leave the school during the school day with other parents or students unless permission in writing is received by the office ([office@talmudtorah.com](mailto:office@talmudtorah.com)) from the parents of that student requesting the leave. Grades 5, 6 and 7 students are subject to the Behaviour Referral System set out in Appendix #2.



### Students at school or school related activities are prohibited from:

1. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures towards other students, parents, teachers, school staff or visitors.
2. Leaving school grounds or school sponsored events without written permission from a parent or caregiver.
3. Disobeying directives from school personnel or failing to adhere to school policies, rules, and regulations.
4. Stealing from students, staff, or the school.
5. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students or employees and/or throwing objects that may cause bodily injury or damage property.
6. Cheating or copying the work of another, disobeying school rules and school bus rules.
7. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse to students, staff or other individuals.
8. Bullying, harassing, teasing, or blackmail; that is, obtaining money or other objects of value from an unwilling person, or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
9. Name-calling, ethnic, racial, or derogatory statements that school officials have reasonable cause to believe will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
10. Participating in any kind of cyber bullying or harassment aimed at VTT students or staff. Cyber bullying and harassment include but are not limited to any form of inappropriate verbal, written or physical behaviour which is unsolicited and unwelcome and interferes with an individual's performance and well being.
11. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual behaviour.
12. Selling, giving or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of: marijuana or a controlled substance; a dangerous drug, glue, aerosol paint, or other volatile chemical; or alcohol.
13. Selling, showing, giving or delivering to another person or possessing pornography in any form.
14. Bringing a firearm to school. Possessing razors, switchblades, box cutters, chains, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person.
15. Smoking, vaping, e-cigarettes or using tobacco products and/or playing with matches or fire.
16. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process including, but not limited to, failure to adhere to the school dress code, having a pager or cell phone activated, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
17. Making bomb threats, false alarms and threats, hoaxes, or accusations regarding school safety.
18. Hacking into another student's computers, email or instant messaging application.
19. Engaging in any illegal conduct as defined by law.
20. Any other substandard conduct that the school deems to be inappropriate.

#### Consequences

In the event a student engages in prohibited conduct, a member of the leadership team will decide on the appropriate investigation and response. Such response(s) may include, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Verbal reprimand
- ✓ Behavioural contract
- ✓ Restriction of privileges
- ✓ Detention
- ✓ Parental contact
- ✓ Temporary withdrawal of certain privileges or participation in school activities
- ✓ Out of School suspension up to 10 school days (see Appendix #3)
- ✓ Probation
- ✓ Referral to outside agency

## APPENDICES

### #1. ELEMENTARY LATENESS

#### Definition of an Unexcused Late:

If a student arrives in the classroom after the 8:30 a.m. or 12:25 p.m. bell, he/she is considered to be late. An unexcused late is defined as a late for which the student has not provided a written note on his/her return to school, or for which a parent/guardian did not notify the office and teacher by email on the day the late occurred. Absence notes will not be accepted retroactively.

#### Reasonable Lateness:

There are occasions when lateness is unavoidable such as when doctor's appointments must be set during school hours. Reasonable lateness is determined by administration. No more than four lates monthly will be tolerated without approved reason.

#### For late entry:

**Parkade:** After 8:25 a.m., late students must sign their name and grade on the clipboard at the parkade gate. After 8:45 a.m., late students must enter the school by way of the 26th Avenue entrance and report to the office to sign in.

**26th Avenue:** After 8:25 a.m., late students must sign in either in the front foyer or at the front office.

### #2. GRADES 5, 6 and 7 BEHAVIOUR REFERRAL SYSTEM

The leadership team will assign "points" to students in Grades 5, 6, and 7 who do not act in accordance with the VTT Code of Conduct in or out of class, on the bus, who do not follow class or school rules, or who interfere with other students' learning. In the event of problematic behaviours, students in Grades 5 to 7 participate in a system as it relates to inappropriate behaviour. Students are expected to adhere to VTT's Code of Conduct. In the event the expectations are not being met, the students will be issued "points" up to a **maximum of 10 points**, after which a consequence occurs. Examples of each points level can be found below:

**1 point:** (i.e., inappropriate dress, eating in the halls)

**3 points:** (i.e., misbehaving in the halls, lunchroom, assemblies, hiding in bathrooms or classrooms at lunch or recess, classroom issues related to interfering with the learning of others)

**5 points:** (i.e., being disrespectful of teachers, staff, fellow students, guest speakers, teachers on call, damaging or disrespectful treatment of property, improper bus behaviour or improper behaviour on field trips) or

**10 points:** (these are suspendible behaviours and include fighting, dangerous behaviour on the bus or on school grounds)

◆ Points will accumulate all year (not by term)

◆ In addition to accumulating points, students will be required to participate in some form of restitution as determined by the leadership team (i.e., throwing food in the lunchroom – 3 points and one week cleaning the lunchroom)

◆ Students may also be suspended for accumulating 10 points

◆ **10-point offenses will result in an automatic suspension and a behaviour contract.** The contract must be signed by the student, his/her parent(s) and a member of the leadership team

◆ If students go two months without accumulating any points, two points will be deducted from the total

When faculty and staff are issuing a Behaviour Referral Form, it will be returned to the leadership team who will be meeting at least once a week to review all of the forms.

Point system steps:

1. A member of the school staff or faculty will advise the student that a Behaviour Referral Form is being completed.
2. The completed form will be forwarded to the leadership team who will collect and manage all of the documentation, and will assign the points accordingly. The leadership team will meet at least once a week to review all forms and will provide feedback to faculty.
3. Once the leadership team sees that a student has reached five points, a telephone call will be made to the parents, and a plan will be devised with the student and parents in an effort to improve behaviour. \*\*Teachers will be advised of the plan following the meeting.
4. If a student reaches 10 points, the student will receive a suspension and will be re-admitted to school on a behaviour contract to be signed by the student, his/her parents, and a member of the leadership team.

### **#3. OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION UP TO TEN SCHOOL DAYS**

1. Suspension is defined as the removal of a student from the school premises. While suspended, a student is prohibited from attending activities on, off or at the school premises. The Principal or designee may suspend a student for conduct that is defined under the Examples of Prohibited Conduct, but is not limited to this list.
2. The school reserves the right to suspend a student pending an investigation or hearing with respect to an infraction where it is in the best interest of the school to do so having regard to the school's responsibility to provide a safe and secure learning environment.
3. A suspension may be imposed for one or more school days for each separate infraction.
4. A student is responsible for all class work missed during the period of suspension. The school will cooperate with the student to provide homework assignments during the suspension.
5. The Division Principals or designee shall conduct a conference at which the student is advised of the misconduct and the student is given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.
6. School personnel will notify the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) prior to the student being sent home as a result of the prohibited conduct.
7. The Division Principals or the designee has the final authority regarding a decision to suspend.
8. During the period of suspension (including suspensions over ten school days), it is the responsibility of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to provide the appropriate supervision for the student.

### **#4. SUSPENSIONS OVER TEN (10) SCHOOL DAYS OR EXPULSION**

If misconduct occurs and an investigation determines that a suspension or an expulsion of over 10 school days is warranted, the student and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the President of the Board, shall be informed in writing by the Head of School or designee of the allegations and the recommendation for suspension or expulsion of over 10 school days. A decision to suspend or expel a student over 10 school days shall not be implemented until there has been a hearing by the Discipline Committee, unless the right to such a hearing is specifically waived by the student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in writing.

# Uniform Policy & Student Appearance

Uniforms help build school spirit based on a sense of unity and identification with a special and unique group. They also ease social pressures and cost to families.

<b>THE VTT UNIFORM</b>
Shirt: Regular or fitted <b>white/navy/powder blue</b> <u>NEW</u> logo golf shirt (short or long-sleeved)
Vest or Pullover (sweater): Navy with white piping (mandatory part of winter uniform)
Skort/Scooter: Navy with length just above the knee Tunic: Only for girls in SK to Grade 3 Pant: Navy with elastic or adjustable waist Walking short: Navy with adjustable waist <b>GYM SHORTS ARE NOT AN APPROPRIATE SUBSTITUTE FOR WALKING SHORTS.</b>
Socks: White or navy socks (with pants) Navy knee socks or tights (with skort or tunic)
All boys are required to wear a <b>kippah</b> while classes are in session. This is <b>MANDATORY</b> . Girls have the option to wear a kippah, should they choose.
<b>Gym Strip for students in Grades 6 and 7 only (grey logo shirt; blue uniform sport shorts or skorts)</b>

Vancouver Talmud Torah's Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7 students are required to wear the school uniform during school hours. Parents are responsible to send the student to school in a uniform which is clean, well-maintained and **clearly labelled with the student's name**.

## Why Students Wear Uniforms:

1. Wearing a uniform allows students to focus on more meaningful things than external appearances. We encourage individuality by having the students develop standards of excellence in their spiritual, physical and intellectual lives.
2. We believe that being a grown-up lasts for a long enough time. Elementary schooling should be relatively free from the pressures of fitting into prescribed modes of dress by external influences such as the media. etc.

**The uniform policy will be strictly enforced.** Please ensure your children are appropriately dressed before arriving to school. Students coming to school in inappropriate attire will be given a written reminder and/or phone call home. **If there**

**is an issue regarding your child's uniform, please contact the teacher or the leadership team soon as possible.**

Our uniform supplier is **Cambridge and Company**. Fittings are offered at the end of the school year. Items ordered will be delivered to the school.

Phone: 604-924-9009

Email: [info@cambridgeuniforms.com](mailto:info@cambridgeuniforms.com)

Website is: [www.cambridgeuniforms.com](http://www.cambridgeuniforms.com)



Store: #135-1305 Welch Street, North Vancouver  
To order online, our school code is **TOR807**

# Arrivals, Dismissals, Absences & School Closures

All independent school students must attend school a minimum of 135 days to qualify for the Ministry of Education grant.

## THE 135-DAY ATTENDANCE FORMULA

September 30th is the date on which the official enrollment count is taken for both public and independent schools.

All students in independent schools who attend a minimum of 135 days up to May 15th are counted as fully qualifying students. Students attending independent schools fewer than 135 days by May 15th are counted as partially qualifying students in proportion to the number of days they attend school. This count includes all students who have transferred in between September 30th and May 15th of the school year.

Grant payments from the Ministry of Education are made to VTT in September, January and June of each year. These grants are on the basis of September 30th enrollment reports. According to the Ministry of Education, inexcusable absence (including travelling) for an extended period of time during the school year is not considered an appropriate reason to miss school. Therefore, the Ministry deducts the grant to the school. Families are required to notify the VTT Finance office if they have such plans for

## ARRIVALS

**Rishonim and Junior Kindergarten classes** begin at 8:15 a.m. Early childhood students must be accompanied by an adult into the classroom and all children must be signed in and out every day. **Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7 classes** begin at 8:30 a.m. Please ensure that students **arrive ten to fifteen minutes earlier** to prepare for school. Students will be permitted to wait in the halls on the main floor until 8:15 a.m. when the doors leading to classroom wings are opened. Students and parents may enter the school from 26th Avenue or by way of the underground parkade.

As classroom doors open at 8:15 a.m., it is preferred that parents drop off students between 8:15 a.m. and 8:20 a.m. We encourage parents of students in the upper grades (**from Grade 2 onwards**) to say their goodbyes in the parkade drive-thru or in front of the school as it is desirable to foster independence and self-reliance in our older students.

**The school does not provide before school supervision for students and is not responsible for supervision of students outside of school hours.** In the case of before and after school programs, the contractor leading the activity is responsible for supervision and it is the parent's responsibility to drop off and pick up students at the specified time.

## LATE ARRIVALS

All students arriving late to school must sign in before proceeding to class. **This applies to all students, including early childhood students, for safety and security reasons.**

## DISMISSALS

Students are dismissed by their teachers and are expected to leave the building immediately at 3:20 p.m. (2:20 p.m. on early dismissal Fridays; 11:25 a.m. on early dismissal days) for pick up by parents. The only exception is if students are staying to work with a teacher, are attending a supervised extra-curricular activity, or are working in the Learning Commons until closing time (4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; closed on Fridays, with the exception of early dismissal Fridays when it closes at 3:20 p.m.).

The school does not provide after school supervision for students and is not responsible for supervision of students outside of school hours. In the case of before and after school programs, the contractor leading the activity is responsible for supervision and it is the parent's responsibility to drop off and pick up students at the specified time.

Students must not be left to wait for their parents past 3:45 p.m. (2:45 p.m. on early dismissal Fridays; 11:45 a.m. on early dismissal days). Our traffic team manages the parkade drive thru until 3:45 p.m. only. It is the responsibility of parents to pick up students on time.

In the event parents wish their children to walk home unaccompanied, they must complete and submit to the office a **Permission to Walk Home Unaccompanied form** (can be downloaded here:

<http://storage.talmudtorah.com/walk-home-unaccompanied.pdf>) and agree that walking home is allowed only if their children leave the building immediately upon school dismissal at 3:20 p.m. (2:20 p.m. on early dismissal Fridays; 11:25 a.m. on early dismissal days). Students staying at school under the exceptions noted above will not be released to walk home and it is the responsibility of parents to pick up students at the specified time.



## EARLY DISMISSAL FRIDAYS

In order to enable both students and staff members to arrive home with sufficient time to prepare for Shabbat on the early winter Friday nights, the school will be dismissed at **2:20 p.m. beginning November 15, 2019**. Regular dismissal will resume on **Friday, March 13, 2020**. The school does not provide after school supervision for students, and is not responsible for students outside of school hours. **Students must not be left to wait for their parents past 2:45 p.m.** Our traffic team manages the parkade drive thru until 2:45 p.m. only. It is the responsibility of parents to pick up students on time.

## EARLY DISMISSALS BY PARENTS

Students may not be excused from school before regular dismissal time unless there are very urgent extenuating circumstances. **Parents are asked to cooperate by arranging medical, dental and other appointments after school hours.** Students are not permitted to leave the school for lunch without prior arrangement and written permission. We urge parents not to take students for lunch prior to the dismissal bell.

If a student must leave early for an appointment, the parent should email the classroom teacher **and** the office at [office@talmudtorah.com](mailto:office@talmudtorah.com). As has always been the case, the e-mail to the office and teachers is a courtesy so the office and teachers know that a student will be leaving the class in the middle of a lesson. However, with so many students leaving during the day for various reasons, and often multiple students from the same class, it is difficult for office staff and teachers to keep track.

Please allow an extra 5 minutes when you pick up your child to give us time to call your child down from class. An alternative is to call when you are close to the school and we can call him/her down then.

## ABSENCES, LONG TERM ABSENCES AND MAKE UPS

Regular attendance in school is a prerequisite for scholastic achievement – especially in our dual program where every precious moment counts.

Review of the lesson taught the previous day, the current day's lesson, and homework assignments are covered daily. In case of absence of more than one day, parents should arrange for assignments and books to be sent home with a friend. VTT discourages parents from taking their students out of school for extended vacations. **In the event that families choose to take such vacations, teachers are not responsible for preparing special lessons and homework in advance. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure completion of assignments and the students' responsibility to complete assignments and catch up.**

In the event a student is unable to attend class, the school office must be contacted by email ([office@talmudtorah.com](mailto:office@talmudtorah.com)) by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence to explain the reason for the absence; the teacher may be included on the email. Parents of students who are absent from school for any reason are required to submit a letter of explanation to the school. **This is a Ministry of Education requirement and the documentation will be kept on file.** If there is an issue impacting attendance, please contact Adam Gelmon, Principal of Intermediate, as soon as possible.

### SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

A decision to close the school is based on safety and security of students, not on the number of centimeters/inches of snow. A variety of factors may influence our decision.

Radio and TV news reports advise motorists of the danger in driving in weather conditions, and provide information on transit cancellations and school closures. Listen to CBC AM 690, CKNW AM 980 or FM 88.1.

Should it be necessary at any time to close the school due to serious weather, a notice will be sent by 6:30 a.m. via email, a post will appear on the VTT School Facebook page, and a message will be on the school website, [www.talmudtorah.com](http://www.talmudtorah.com).

### RAINY DAY POLICY

During the rainy season, please ensure students come to school dressed for inclement weather. Students benefit from fresh air and, consistent with school policies throughout the Lower Mainland, **they are required to play outdoors, rain or shine.** As Vancouver Talmud Torah has a small covered area, it is imperative that all students come to school equipped with the proper rain gear. *It may be helpful to keep an extra set of clothing in the student's locker.*

### LEARNING COMMONS USE

Hours: Monday to Thursday, the Learning Commons is open until 4:30 p.m. for student use. Parents must register their children in advance to use the learning commons after school. There is a maximum of 40 students permitted at one time. The LC closes at school dismissal time on Fridays for Shabbat, except on early dismissal Fridays (November to March) when it stays open until 3:20 p.m.

**Students are expected to behave with decorum when using the Learning Commons after school. VTT reserves the right to suspend or end privileges for students who fail to abide by these expectations.**

Note: During class time the Learning Commons operates on a flexible schedule. As a result, use may be limited occasionally due to classes, meetings or other activities in session. Watch for a sign on the door. Parents are asked not to linger in the learning commons during instructional time as it can be distracting to the students.

**LOANS:** Parents and students may borrow three books at a time for up to two weeks. Borrowing of current Jewish holiday materials may be restricted to ensure teachers' access for classroom use.

**OVERDUE BOOKS:** Overdue books must either be returned or renewed before other books can be signed out.

**LOST BOOKS must be either replaced or paid for by the student (family).**

Heavy snow day?  
Wondering if school is open?

What to do:

- ✓ Check your email
- ✓ Check the VTT Facebook page
- ✓ Check [talmudtorah.com](http://talmudtorah.com)
- ✓ Listen to CBC AM 690 or FM 88.1, CNKW AM 980

# Immunizations and Health & Diet Issues

So take good care of your n'fashot/  
whole beings...

--Deuteronomy 4:15



Vancouver Talmud Torah follows Vancouver Coastal Health's protocols regarding immunizations. If there is an outbreak of a communicable disease inside the school, non-immunized students will be required to stay home until Vancouver Coastal Health has deemed it is safe to return to school. It is recommended that children have the following immunizations when enrolling at school:

- ✓ Basic series of diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus and polio (DPT and polio).
- ✓ A booster of DPT and polio given after the fourth birthday, but before school entrance to Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7.
- ✓ Immunization against measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) often given as a combination vaccine (MMR).

A written record of the completed immunizations must be given to the school office before enrollment can be completed. Immunizations can be updated by a family doctor, or by Vancouver Coastal Health, which has on-going clinics.

**The parent of any student who is not immunized due to medical exemption must provide signed documentation of this.** According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, *immunization to control serious infectious diseases has been one of the outstanding achievements of preventive health medicine*. Choosing not to immunize one's child puts the health of students, staff and community members who cannot be vaccinated at risk. *Non-immunized students may be excluded from school in the event of a communicable disease outbreak.*

## STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION AND FIELD TRIP CONSENT FORM AND WAIVER FORM

This form needs to be completed annually when enrolling online. It is extremely important for the office to have immediate access to current information. If these forms are not updated annually, this could prevent the student from attending school trips and activities.

If a student has serious allergies or health concerns, additional forms with specific details related to their needs must be completed and returned to the school office. Arrangements should be made with the office to provide any medication the student may require.

## ACCIDENTS, ILLNESSES AND EMERGENCIES

The school has certified first aid personnel on staff in the event of any medical emergency. 911 may also be called in the event of a medical emergency.

It is important that each parent keep the school informed of the **CURRENT telephone number** where s/he can be reached during the day in the event of an emergency, as well as current numbers of emergency contacts authorized to act for parents in the event they cannot be reached. Parents are able to make these changes online through the Talmud Torah parent portal.

In the event a student feels ill at school, parents will be contacted if it seems necessary. In cases of serious injury, paramedics will be called and your child may be taken to the emergency room at Children's Hospital. The school will make every effort to contact the parents or the emergency contact in the event the parents are unavailable.

Medication cannot be administered to students by staff.

## CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES

**If a child has a suspected virus or has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please notify the office immediately.** To maintain the healthiest environment possible for all our students, children should be kept home for 24 hours after all symptoms have passed. If a student displays symptoms while at school, parents will be contacted and asked to take their child home.

While it is not required to keep a child home if s/he has a cold, **parents are asked to please use their best judgment.** If s/he is continuously coughing or sneezing or has a very runny nose, it may be wise to keep them home. Please speak with your child and reinforce the importance of **hand washing**. Every classroom is equipped with hand sanitizer.

It is appropriate for a child to return to school following an illness:

- ✓ After 24 hours of antibiotic therapy for strep throat, conjunctivitis or other contagious bacterial conditions.
- ✓ For those students suffering from viral conjunctivitis (pink eye), students should remain home until symptoms have subsided as antibiotic treatment does not diminish the condition and the risk of spreading is high. Please consult with a physician for advice on when it is safe for your child to return to school without compromising the health of others.
- ✓ After 24 hours without fever (and without medication). Many children with a nighttime fever will not have a fever in the morning, but it spikes again later in the day.
- ✓ After 48 hours (for early childhood) without vomiting,

**Fifth Disease** is a viral illness often characterized first by fever and mild cold like symptoms and later by bright red blotches on the face, torso, arms and legs. This virus can have serious implications for pregnant women and individuals with compromised immunity. If you suspect Fifth Disease, please do not send your child to school. According to Vancouver Coastal Health, once the rash appears, children are no longer contagious and can return to school.

## NOTICE TO PARENTS ABOUT LICE

Head lice are small insects that live in the hair and scalp. They do not carry disease but are very unpleasant because they cause itching. Head lice are a common problem in childhood. They spread quickly because children play closely together.

**Parents are responsible for assisting in the prevention and management of outbreaks of nits (lice eggs) and head lice through regular checks of the child's hair and commencing immediate treatment when head lice or nits are detected.**

If a teacher suspects a student is infested with head lice, the parents will be contacted and asked to take their child home.

**A child is required to stay home from school until effective treatment against head lice has begun. Hair and scalp must be clear of nits before returning to school.**

In the event a case of lice is reported in a class, a notice will be emailed to the parents of the students in that class complete with instructions on monitoring and treatment. Please instruct your children not to share hats, *kipot*, brushes, combs and other headwear to prevent the spread of lice. If there is an outbreak, girls in particular are encouraged to cover/wrap their hair (scarves/bandanas) to limit its spread.

## PEANUT/NUT AWARE POLICY

At Vancouver Talmud Torah, we endeavour to provide a safe environment for all our students. To that end, we must respect the fact that some of our students have life-threatening allergies to peanuts, nuts and nut products. For some students, ingestion or exposure by unknowingly touching traces or residues of this food substance (i.e., on a ball,

on a hand, student desk or lunch table) could cause anaphylactic shock and, without immediate emergency medical assistance, loss of consciousness and death.

In response, VTT, like most other schools throughout the Lower Mainland, is a "peanut/nut aware" school. This means that products containing peanuts, nuts or nut products in students' lunches and snacks are not allowed. Food brought in for sharing must not contain peanuts, nuts or nut products. We do not use the terminology "peanut/nut free" because we cannot guarantee that there will never be traces of peanuts/nuts in the school.

We understand this may cause some inconvenience to our families. Below are some nutritious lunch and snack ideas:

### Peanut free lunch ideas:

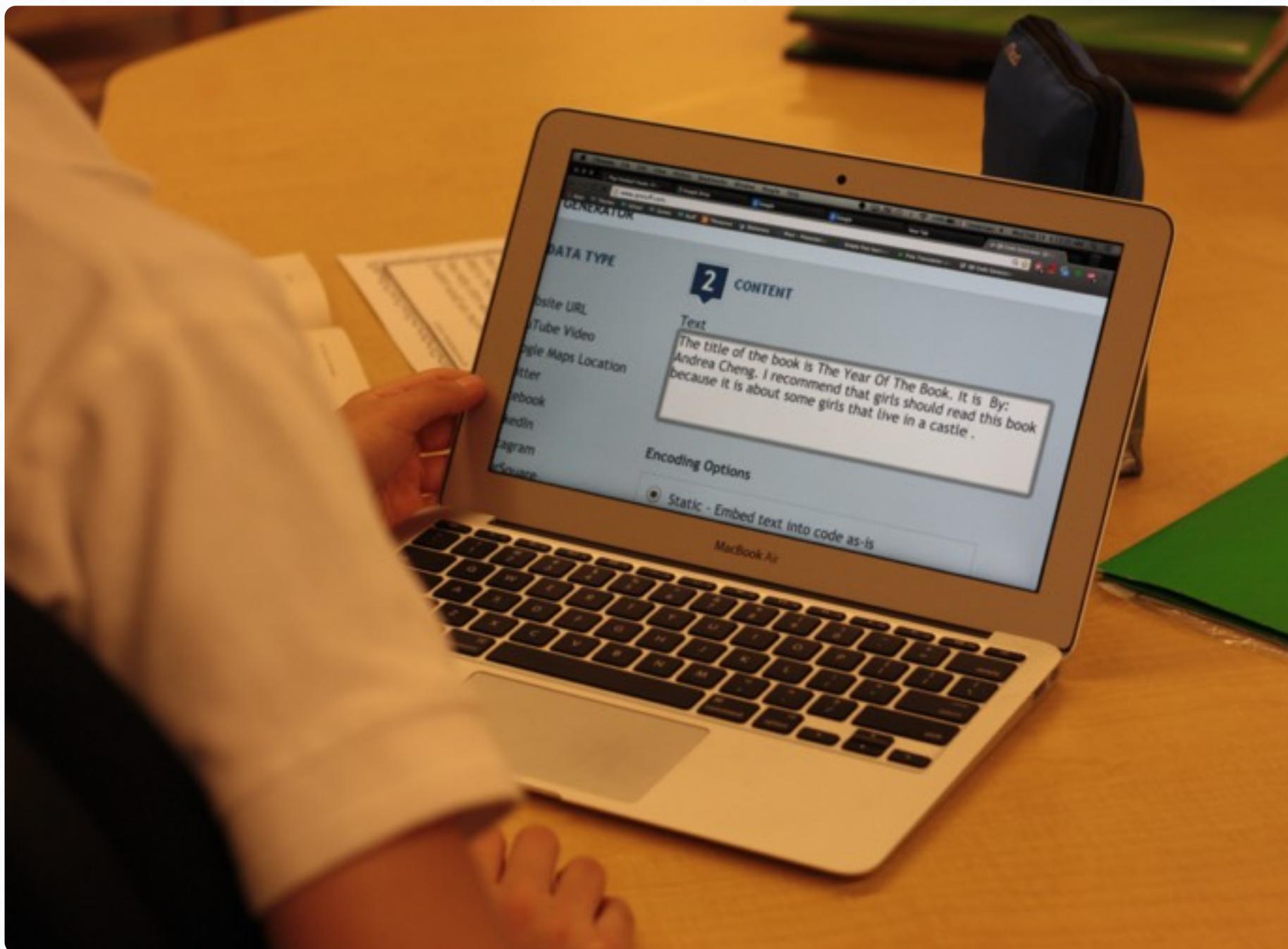
- ✓ Pita wrap sandwich with hummus/refried beans/cheese with lettuce and tomato
- ✓ Quesadilla wedges with melted cheese and/or refried beans and side container of salsa
- ✓ Boiled cheese tortellini with dip
- ✓ Macaroni and cheese and other forms of pasta
- ✓ Crackers with hard boiled egg or cheese
- ✓ Yogurt with carrot, celery and cucumber sticks and a piece of fruit
- ✓ Bagel sandwich with cheese/cream cheese
- ✓ Pizza slice with vegetables or fruit
- ✓ Soup or stew in a thermos
- ✓ A multi-compartment plastic container with your child's favourite fruits, vegetables, dips or condiments

### Peanut free snack ideas:

- ✓ Yogurt
- ✓ Fresh fruit or dried fruit
- ✓ Crackers and cheese
- ✓ Celery stuffed with soft cheese or cream cheese
- ✓ Homemade trail mix with cereal, pretzels, and raisins/Graham or animal crackers
- ✓ Vegetables with dip
- ✓ String cheese
- ✓ Mini pitas or mini bagels

# Technology Use: Rights & Obligations

The privilege of having access to technology comes with certain rights and obligations. When used properly, tech tools can enhance student learning.



## STUDENT RIGHTS:

- ✓ Students have the right to an excellent learning environment. Our plethora of Internet-enabled devices will provide access to appropriate educational material to enhance school projects. It will enable communication with other internet users when sharing common school-based interests.
- ✓ Students have the right to access information that is consistent with the values and goals of the school.
- ✓ Students have the right to teacher and staff guidance. If students are not sure of anything, they are encouraged to ask for help.

## STUDENT OBLIGATIONS:

- ✓ Act respectfully: be polite and use appropriate language, especially with e-mail.
- ✓ Participate responsibly: protect one's password. Look after school equipment. Do not bring any computer viruses to school.
- ✓ Be legal: stay away from anything that is offensive, illegal, obscene or threatening. Use only licensed software.
- ✓ Behave safely: do not reveal any personal information such as address, phone number, or banking information.

## VANCOUVER TALMUD TORAH RESERVES THE RIGHT:

- ✓ To ensure all internet-enabled devices are being used for academic and school purposes only by periodically monitoring student computer activities.
- ✓ To restrict information stored on the computer and to restrict information transmitted over the network.
- ✓ To take away the privilege to use school devices and equipment if students are found to be abusing the resources and/or accessing inappropriate sites. If appropriate, the school may take other disciplinary actions.

Using laptops, iPads and other internet-enabled equipment is a privilege. Use it responsibly and appropriately. Do not abuse it!

**Please visit our website and click on the “Policies, Handbooks and Forms” link to read our Acceptable Use Policy for students. It is every parent’s responsibility to discuss this policy with their children in age appropriate language.**



# Traffic & Parking

Families are encouraged to use the drive-thru in the joint VTT-BI parkade for drop-off and pick-up. It is safe, efficient, convenient--and time saving!



As a destination school attracting families from across Greater Vancouver, getting to and from our school safely and in an orderly manner is of paramount importance. Please read the instructions on the following pages carefully to ensure your child--and every other VTT student--benefits from the careful and considerate conduct of each and every parent and adult in our school community. There are specific rules regarding drop-off, pick-up and neighbourhood parking that **MUST** be followed. **These rules apply to every drop-off and pick-up--NO EXCEPTIONS!**

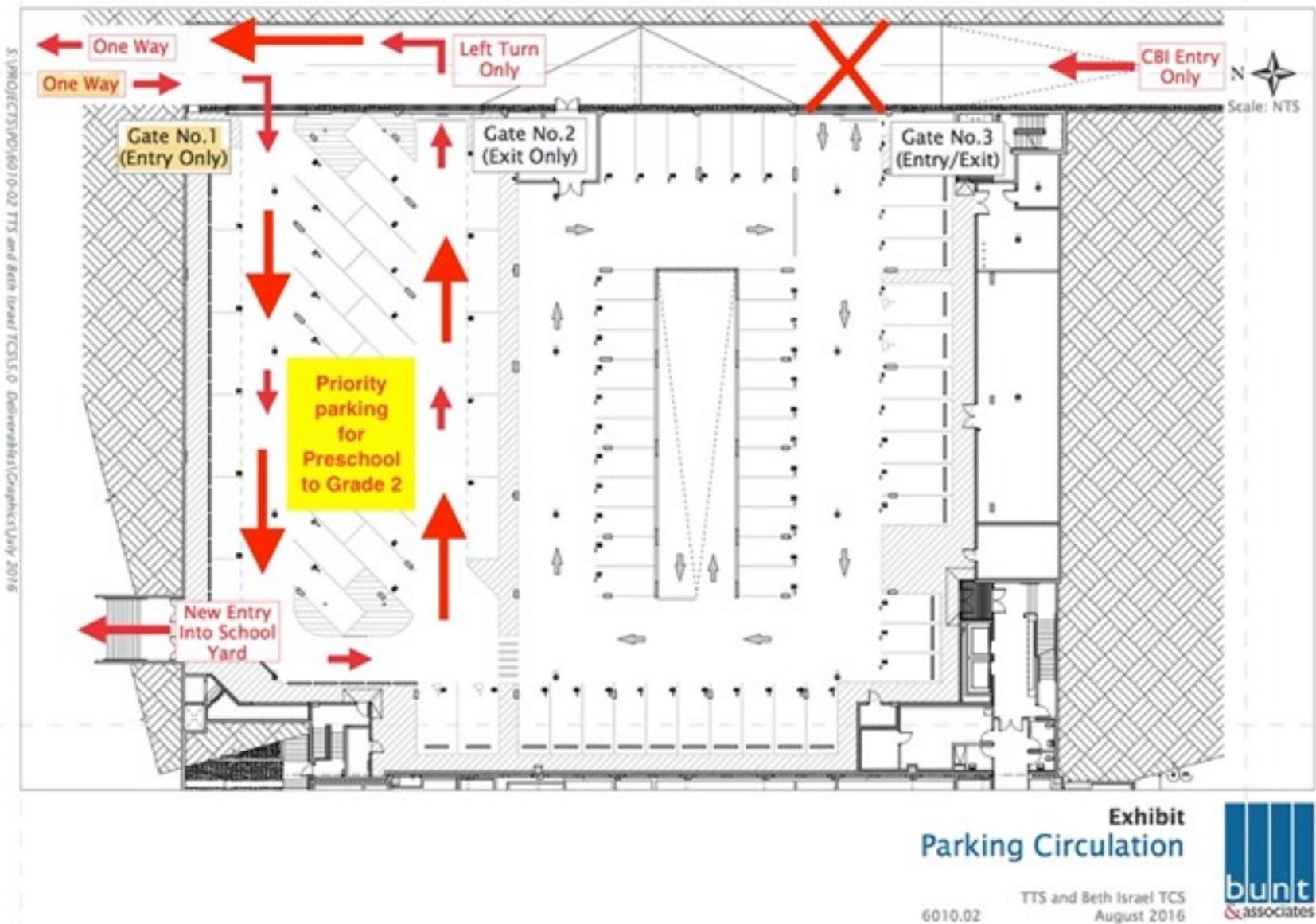
## **STOP!**

The parkade is a high traffic area with many kids on foot. Drivers are asked to turn off phones, turn radios down, and keep pets in the back to ensure a safe environment for all concerned.

**Distracted driving is dangerous!**

## JOINT VTT-BI PARKADE

The VTT-BI Joint Parkade opened in the fall of 2015. It is located off 28th Avenue underneath Congregation Beth Israel. This is the safest and most efficient method to drop off your children in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. We strongly encourage ALL FAMILIES to use the parkade.



## ENTERING THE PARKADE

The only way to safely and efficiently enter the parkade is from 26th Avenue. That is, all cars must enter the parkade from 26th Avenue (heading east or west) and then make an immediate right turn into the parkade (Gate #1). **NEVER enter the parkade from 28th Avenue.**

Once in the parkade, you have two choices:

The easiest, quickest and most efficient drop-off method is to pull up to the curb and let your children out through the passenger side door. We **strongly encourage** families with children in **Grades 1-7** to use this method as there are not enough spaces

for everyone to park in the parkade. Our traffic team will assist your children out of their cars and ensure they safely enter the school. Students as young as Senior Kindergarten are capable of getting themselves into the school.

If you are planning to park—**and spaces are limited—only** park in spaces on P1 and P2 marked as VTT ONLY. The angled parking on P1 is reserved for families with babies and young children. Everyone else should use the drive-thru.

## EXITING THE PARKADE

There is ONLY ONE EXIT DOOR. That is Gate #2 in the middle of the parkade. Follow the signs and arrows directing you to Gate #2.

Once you exit the parkade, you MUST TURN LEFT and head towards 26th Avenue. Upon exiting the parkade, **you can only turn RIGHT on to 26th Avenue.**

## OAK STREET IS DANGEROUS

Students must never be picked up or dropped off on Oak Street. Traffic is brisk and congested along Oak Street. **During morning and afternoon rush hours, there is no stopping on Oak Street so please do not pull over to drop off your children.**

During early dismissal Fridays, please do not park along the east side of Oak Street as this severely impedes the flow of traffic.

## DO NOT CROSS OAK STREET

Students who walk or take the southbound Oak Street bus should NOT cross Oak Street at West 26th Avenue. They should only cross with the traffic signal at West King Edward Avenue or Nanton/28th Avenue.

Tips for a safe and efficient parkade drive-thru experience:

- ✓ In the morning, arrive a little earlier. The parkade is quiet just before 8:15 a.m. Arriving a little bit before allows you quick entry and exit.
- ✓ In the afternoon, arrive a little later. School is dismissed at 3:20 p.m. By the time students collect their belongings, say goodbye to their friends, and make their way to the parkade, it is almost 3:30 p.m. By arriving later, you reduce the amount of congestion in the parkade. The traffic team is on site until 3:45 p.m.
- ✓ Listen to the traffic team. They know what they are doing. They also want to keep everyone safe and

## NEVER LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE

Never leave your vehicle unattended in the drive-thru. A smooth and efficient traffic operation relies on parents staying in their vehicles and proceeding when directed by our traffic team.

### VTT SUPPORTS CARPOOLING!

To ease both the traffic and time burden, contact Jennifer Shecter-Balin ([info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com)) for help in finding carpooling partners.

## WHERE TO PARK IN THE PARKADE

We encourage our families—whenever possible—to use the parkade drive-thru and avoid parking in stalls as spaces are limited. Should one choose to park their vehicle, **do NOT park in any spaces marked SYNAGOGUE PARKING, RESERVED OR STAFF PARKING.** The playground doors to the parkade will lock at 8:45 a.m. every morning. Please ensure you return to your vehicle by that time. **If you are volunteering in the school and using the parkade, please register your vehicle and plate with our security team and report to the office to sign in and receive a visitors' pass.**

## PARKADE AND DRIVE-THRU HOURS

The traffic team manages traffic in the parkade and drive-thru in the mornings from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and in the afternoons from 2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. If parents are using the drive-thru, and have arrived early, they **MUST REMAIN IN THEIR VEHICLES AT ALL TIMES.** After 3:45 p.m., parents will need to come to the front office at 26th Avenue to pick up their children. However, for students enrolled in after school programs, the program vendor will communicate pick-up instructions with you.

## PARKING IN FRONT OF THE MAIN OFFICE ON 26th AVENUE

**Parking in front of the main office is prohibited at all times as it is the fire access to the school. Please do not block this space, even for a short period of time.**

## STOPPING ON 26th AVENUE

City of Vancouver by-laws prohibit vehicles from stopping anywhere on Oak Street, even for a minute. **DO NOT STOP on Oak Street EVER!** If you need to drop off your child, proceed to the parkade and use the drive-thru lane there.

## KING EDWARD MALL/SAFeway PARKING LOT

Since the joint VTT-BI parkade opened in 2015, VTT no longer has a parking agreement with Safeway for use of their lot. Should one choose to park in the Safeway lot as opposed to the VTT-BI joint parkade, doing so is at one's own risk and peril. VTT will not accept responsibility for ticketing or towing of community members' vehicles in the Safeway lot. **VTT parents do NOT have Safeway parking lot privileges. The parking lot has a "no walk off" policy.**

## VTT BUS TO THE JCC

With congestion along Oak Street increasing and with an eye toward environmental stewardship, VTT's bus service aims to make the after school commute to the JCC as convenient and worry-free as possible.

★Cost per ride is only \$2.00 (heavily subsidized service)

★Bus departs VTT at 3:35 p.m. SHARP!

School bus service starts the afternoon of **Wednesday, September 4th**, with seats allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis, with priority going to students registered in Club J.

## BUS RULES

If the student will not ride the bus as scheduled, **the school office must be notified by email ONLY ([office@talmudtorah.com](mailto:office@talmudtorah.com)) no later than 12:00 noon on the day of travel.** A ride will be considered cancelled only when a confirmation email from the office is sent to the parent.

**VANCOUVER TALMUD TORAH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CANCEL BUS SERVICE IF RULES ARE NOT FOLLOWED.** If your child is a bus rider, please review these rules with them, taking particular note of the quiet, seated decorum required. **Failure to follow bus protocols may result in suspension of service for the remainder of the school year.**

## GENERAL SCHOOL BUS RULES

1. All students **must remain seated** and behave appropriately.
2. Students cannot save seats for friends. The driver and/or bus assistant reserves the right to assign seats.
3. All students must sit straight ahead in their seats (never standing while bus is in motion), with knees in front and hips squarely on the bench.
4. If a student opens a window it should be closed upon leaving the bus.
5. Students must not put any body part out the window or throw anything out the window.
6. Voice levels must be at an absolute minimum in order for the driver to concentrate on driving and safety. **There will be no shouting and screaming at any time.**
7. When the driver or assistant speaks, students are to remain quiet until his/her message has been conveyed.
8. **No eating or drinking** is allowed on the bus at any time.
9. No garbage is to be left on the floor or in between the seats. Students are to use the garbage bin at the front of the bus when exiting.
10. Students not following these rules will have bus privileges suspended.

**These rules concern SAFETY and are to be adhered to at all times.**

**VTT supports carpooling! For assistance finding compatible families, email [info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com)**



# Miscellaneous

Much happens in a single school day at VTT! Read this section for all those niggling questions you still may have.  
Note: Our cell phone policy is in this section.



## SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND MONEY AT SCHOOL

The following items are basic daily requirements for school:

- ✓ Proper uniform, including **kippot for boys (mandatory)**, and inclement weather attire
- ✓ School bag and all needed school supplies
- ✓ Gym uniform on appropriate days (for Grade 6 and 7 only)
- ✓ Name and identification labels on **ALL** personal clothing and supplies
- ✓ Lunch and plenty of snacks
- ✓ Bus fare (if applicable for VTT bus drop-ins)

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

School supplies are currently ordered in bulk for Grades 1 to 5 as part of the tuition. School supplies lists for Grade 6 and 7 are electronically distributed over the summer and posted on the VTT website as well.

## SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

The school issues textbooks to all students. Students are responsible for covering all books (if requested), keeping them in good condition and returning them at the end of the school year. Parents will be expected to replace lost or damaged textbooks, as well as reimburse the school for any equipment or property their children may damage. This includes missing or lost books borrowed from the Learning Commons.

## MONIES BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Any monies to be turned in to school for payments of trips, plays, etc. should be placed in an envelope and clearly marked with the student's name, amount, and the function it is intended to cover. These should always be given to your child's teacher unless the instructions specify otherwise.

## POLICY REGARDING STUDENT CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES



Students bringing cell phones or other mobile technologies to school are required to keep these devices in their locker and switch them to silent or turn them off **during school hours**. If a cell phone or other device is seen or heard during the school day, the device will be brought to the principals. Mobile devices distract student learning and VTT aims to optimize the environment in which students learn, collaborate and interact. VTT is not responsible for any lost or missing cell phones or electronic devices. **Bringing devices to school is at student's own risk.**

## VISITORS IN THE SCHOOL

The school receives many interested visitors: prospective parents, guest speakers, board members, Ministry of Education officials. You may see them being led by the leadership team through the school and observing classes. All visitors must follow the safety and security protocols outlined on the following pages.



Students are requested NOT to bring any of the following items to school:

- ✓ Unnecessary money
- ✓ Expensive toys or games, including fidget spinners
- ✓ Electronic games
- ✓ Chewing gum
- ✓ Sharp or dangerous objects
- ✓ Electronic pets and trading cards
- ✓ Permanent markers
- ✓ Valuables of any kind
- ✓ Cell phones (must be kept in lockers during the school day)
- ✓ Any other prohibited items outlined in the VTT Code of Conduct Policy

To support holiday programming and contribute to school life and spirit, all families are required to complete 12 volunteer hours at VTT. Volunteer opportunities are posted weekly in the Hadashot. Each time a family member/caregiver completes some volunteer hours, they should record them at

[pac-hours.talmudtorah.com](http://pac-hours.talmudtorah.com)

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

Vancouver Talmud Torah takes the safety and security of its students and personnel very seriously. VTT employs trained security guards to monitor the school. We also take direction from external professionals who regularly audit VTT's security protocols. Furthermore, VTT works closely with Jewish Federation to ensure complete community partnership in matters of security. **Any suspicious behaviour or concerns should be reported to Natalie Chark, Office Manager, who will document it and forward to the leadership team.**

Every protocol has been designed to maximize your children's and the school's safety.

Our reception area has a security window and intercom system which allows us to communicate with anyone arriving to the school. If you are entering by way of the 26th Avenue entrance between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday (until 4 p.m. on early dismissal Fridays):

- Ring the bell
- Communicate by intercom
- State your name and reason for visiting
- Report to the office

ALL students, parents and visitors MUST report to the office. You will not be granted entry into the school without doing so. ALL students, whether they are late or returning to school after an appointment, etc., MUST sign in. ALL parents and visitors who have an appointment or are volunteering MUST **sign in, leave keys and obtain a visitor's pass.** If you have come into the school with your child before classes begin, and you stay to volunteer, etc., you MUST report to the office as a visitor.

Between 8:25 a.m. and 8:45 a.m., late students sign in at the parkade gate or in the office foyer before going to class, and only parents of young children sign in, accompany their child to class, and leave the school immediately after. After 8:45 a.m., students, parents and visitors report to the office and sign in.

ALL students, parents and visitors MUST sign out prior to leaving the school.

The school may be accessed by way of the parkade/security gate before and after school ONLY as follows:

- 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
- 3:20 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. (until 5:00 p.m. for certain after school programs)

Just as it takes a community to raise a child, so does it take a community to optimize security. Please do not facilitate entrance to the school by opening or holding a secure door to others, and please do not encourage a student to open a secure door for you. We appreciate your part in modeling and helping educate your children to these practices as well.

## SCHOOL TELEPHONE AND FORWARDING MESSAGES/ITEMS

The school telephone is reserved for school business. Students must request prior permission from teachers or staff to use the office phone. The office is unable to accommodate large volumes of calls.

In the unavoidable event that a message needs to be left for a student, the office will do its best to contact them, but cannot guarantee the message will be received.

**Parents should ensure their children are clear on after school arrangements (bus riding, pick-up details, play-dates, etc.) in order to avoid confusion and unnecessary phone calls to and from the office at dismissal time.**

The office is unable to accept any non-school related messages/items. The school is unable to assume responsibility for any items and their delivery (gifts, letters etc.). This does not include lunches and/or school items which should be left in the office for the student to retrieve at recess.

Bus cancellations must be received **by 12:00 p.m. on day of travel** by emailing [office@talmudtorah.com](mailto:office@talmudtorah.com)

## LETTERS OF REFERENCES/REQUESTING COPIES OF REPORT CARDS

Requests for letters of reference for secondary school or other academic programs should be directed, in writing, to Adam Gelmon, Principal of Intermediate. **A minimum of two**

**weeks notice must be provided.** In consultation with the teachers involved, a letter of reference will be written by a member of the leadership team. Please note that letters of reference will be sent directly from VTT to the institution requesting the reference. Report cards are available online and can be downloaded and printed from the parent portal.

### **MEDIA RELEASE AUTHORIZATION**

A Media Release Authorization Form for each student must be completed during the online enrollment process. This form will clearly indicate whether or not you consent to having your child's name and/or photograph published in external media. The school will keep this form on file for the duration of the student's enrollment.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

The school can only release students to individuals listed on their emergency contact card and/or in the case the school has written permission from the parents. The office is unable to accept verbal confirmation due to legal considerations.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The Lost and Found area is located near the small gym and is used for clothing and other lost objects. Smaller non-clothing items and valuables are brought to the office. This area is emptied every term and the contents are donated to charity if they are unclaimed. The school is not responsible for any items left on the premises.

### **SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES**

Holidays and special event assemblies are held on a regular basis to foster appreciation for the beauty of our festivals and the Jewish values they transmit to our students. Please check with the teacher to determine which assemblies are open to parents.

### **GLASS ON SCHOOL PREMISES**

For safety reasons, students should not bring any glass containers to the school under any circumstances.

### **PETS IN THE SCHOOL**

Some of our students have allergies - please do not bring pets into the school.

### **LOCKS AND LOCKERS**

Students will have use of lockers for their coats and other belongings, where possible. Students in Grade 5 to 7 may use a lock to secure their belongings.

### **ROLLING BACKPACKS AT VTT**

With VTT's recent school renovations and the replacement of student lockers, **VTT cannot accommodate rolling backpacks.** In addition to not fitting in these new standard size lockers, they will damage the flooring on our stairs. Students in the primary grades need only bring a small backpack to school to fit their lunch bag and books for the home reading program. Students in the intermediate grades do not need large backpacks as much of the work is done using cloud-based applications.



## HOT LUNCH

We are excited to have renowned caterer, The Perfect Bite, provide hot lunches to Vancouver Talmud Torah. Operating out of our meat and dairy kitchens, the team at The Perfect Bite aims to offer healthy, nutritious and delicious hot lunches to our students. Parents can order hot lunch from one to five days a week in two-month blocks (i.e, September and October, November and December, etc.) through the Munch A Lunch website (online payment accepted). The Perfect Bite is also available to cater special events, both within the school and off school premises.



## SUPPORT VTT THROUGH [TALMUDTORAH.COM/AMAZON](http://TALMUDTORAH.COM/AMAZON)

Do you shop on Amazon? Here is an easy way to support Vancouver Talmud Torah: any time you wish to make a purchase on amazon.ca, go to <http://talmudtorah.com/amazon> and with every purchase you make, VTT earns a commission. Our school then redeems the accumulated commissions for school supplies and other products. This is an easy and simple way to generate income for the school. Bookmark the address in your web browser for quick and easy access.

# Shabbat Challah Recipe

Parents also have the option of ordering a weekly Shabbat kosher challah through our PAC. Watch your emails for ordering instructions.



A frequent parent request . . .

1 tbsp yeast

8 tbsp oil

1 cup warm water

1 tsp sugar

7 cups of flour

3/4 cup sugar

2 1/4 cup of water

2 eggs

2 tsp salt

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1. Mix first 4 ingredients together, put aside and cover for 10 min. (make sure to place in a glass or metal cup or bowl).

2. Place flour and sugar in a mixer and then add in the yeast mixture.

3. Slowly add in water (start with 1 1/4 cups and determine if more needed). Add eggs one at a time. Add salt. Mix in mixer for 2 min. Let rise for 1 hour.

4. Punch down after 1 hour and then shape into challah or challah buns. Let it rise for an additional hour.

5. Brush egg wash over challah then bake at 375. Time will depend on size of challah (about 30 mins).

This recipe makes two generously-sized challot. Halve the recipe for one nicely-sized challah.

# Communications & Development

Visit [talmudtorah.com](http://talmudtorah.com) for the most up-to-date and current school information, including the school calendar. Also be sure to read our weekly e-newsletter, Hadashot, where important information is communicated to our families.



## “HADASHOT” (THE WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER) AND NOTICES TO PARENTS

In order to provide an effective system of communication between school and home, memos, newsletters, notices, etc., will most often be sent **electronically**. These communications are a means of keeping parents informed of school news, field trips, extracurricular activities, and any necessary changes in times and dates already published. Our e-newsletter, Hadashot, is emailed every Friday and contains important calendar and event information. Parents can download the school calendar to their computer or mobile device at [talmudtorah.com](http://talmudtorah.com) or email [info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com) for instructions. We would love to hear about

your children's successes outside of VTT. We enjoy sharing these accomplishments with our community. Email your good news to [iinfo@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com). Photos strongly encouraged!



## REACHING OUT TO OUR GRANDPARENTS

Vancouver Talmud Torah loves grandparents! By providing grandparents, particularly those who do not live in Vancouver, with updates on school activities, we provide an opportunity for our senior community members to *kvell* and feel involved. By providing email and/or home addresses of grandparents, they receive:

- ✓ Invitations to special school functions;
- ✓ Special tours of the school and a chance to see their grandchildren in school, via email links to VTT slideshows, virtual photo albums and videos.

To sign up your grandparents, or any other family member, please send an email to [info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com)

## Development and Fundraising

Delivering an exceptional educational experience for our diverse community of learners and families requires significant resources. VTT accepts students of varying abilities and families of different financial capacities. Yet, we remain competitive with the best private schools in Vancouver. Unlike many private schools, VTT is proud to offer tuition subsidies to more than 30% of our families. However, **tuition fees cannot possibly cover the school's entire annual operating budget.** Remaining revenues come from a variety of sources, including the Ministry of Education, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver and, of course, philanthropy. As a community school, we rely on community support to be successful and accessible. To that end, we ask that our families do their part to the best of their ability to contribute to the school's annual, capital and other campaigns.

Funds raised from individuals, foundations and companies are used to support all three of the school's strategic pillars: educational excellence, financial stability and sustainability, and community. We invest in professional development for our faculty, purchase the latest in technology and supplies, help support families in need, invest in community initiatives in which our students enhance their learning experience, support security infrastructure, offer unparalleled performing arts opportunities, and much, much more.

The development office plans and executes fundraising activities in collaboration with faculty, staff, the VTT Board, the PAC co-chairs, volunteers and other community leaders. These activities are designed to align with, and meet the needs of, the school, as determined by the leadership team and VTT Board.

### Annual Campaign

The annual campaign is the umbrella for VTT's year-round and ongoing fundraising efforts. The funds raised from this campaign all support VTT's ability to deliver an exceptional educational experience. We strive to provide opportunities for all of our families

to participate in the annual campaign and to make gifts that are meaningful to them. Every dollar we raise builds our school and contributes to our success and we are deeply grateful to and appreciative of every donor.

### **Tribute Cards**

Tribute cards are a great way to mark special occasions, family milestones or to honour the memory of loved ones. For a minimum donation of \$18, tribute cards may be sent and the funds designated to a program of your choosing. Donations can be made by contacting the development office or by clicking on the “Donate” link on our website.

### **Campaign Plus Appeal & The United Way**

Campaign Plus gifts made through the Jewish Federation’s annual campaign (75% of funds that exceed your previous year’s gift to the Federation or 75% of a first-time gift) can be designated to VTT. These gifts are extremely beneficial to the school. VTT is also a designated United Way organization.

### **Grants**

Foundation grants are a key source of funding for VTT. The development office drafts and coordinates grant applications, monitors grant expenditures and reports to funding agencies on the impact of giving.

### **Opportunities to Give**

Visit <http://talmudtorah.com/donate> to learn about all the opportunities for school involvement and charitable giving. VTT accepts donations in the form of cheques, credit cards, stocks, bonds, insurance, property and cash from individuals, corporations, government and foundations. Most gifts are eligible for a charitable donation receipt. For more information, please contact the Tirzah Abraham at 604-736-7307 x 3478 or [tabraham@talmudtorah.com](mailto:tabraham@talmudtorah.com).

The Development Office is grateful for the generous community support for the 2016 Campus Campaign. As a result we can now boast:

- ✓ Two new gymnasias that can be combined into a large play or performance space;
- ✓ Two new kosher kitchens and cafeteria/flex space for full-day programming;
- ✓ A new, technology-enriched learning commons that, based on current best practice, will function as the hub of the school where teachers and students can gather and collaborate;
- ✓ Greatly expanded outdoor space for play and sports programming, with reclaimed space where the portables sat, and a state-of-the-art, 20,000 square foot rooftop playground;
- ✓ New, flexible, technology-enabled classrooms for Grade 4 to 7 with ample natural light organized around a “learning street” with teacher-prep areas and collaborative work spaces for students;
- ✓ Renovated SK to Grade 3 learning areas with new flooring, new lighting and an overall refinement to the physical space to provide a better and more modern teaching and learning environment;
- ✓ Bright, fresh and renovated learning and common spaces for the rishonim and junior kindergarten program, including a new, segregated and purpose-built

***(Please consult the school calendar at [talmudtorah.com](http://talmudtorah.com) for actual dates of the events on the following pages. Our web-based Google calendar will always be the most accurate. It can be downloaded and synched on most mobile devices. For help, email [info@talmudtorah.com](mailto:info@talmudtorah.com))***

MONTH	HOLIDAY/EVENT	ADDITIONAL INFO
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	First Day of School	<i>School always opens two days after Labour Day. The day after Labour Day is an administration day for all faculty and staff.</i>
	Welcome Back Coffee	<i>All families are invited for a coffee and a catch up right after drop-off on the first day of school in the school playground.</i>
	Welcome Back BBQ	<i>Join us for a hot dog BBQ in the school playground at pick-up on the first day of school. After school vendors will be present to answer questions about extra-curricular activities.</i>
	Meet the Teacher/Curriculum Night (All Grades)	<i>These evenings fall on different dates in an attempt to allow parents with multiple children in different grades to attend.</i>
	New Parent Tea	<i>All new families are welcome to attend a meet and greet right after drop-off on a Friday morning to make a Shabbat challah.</i>
	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)	<i>All classes dismissed at 11:25 a.m. for Erev (evening of) Rosh Hashanah (if applicable); no classes on Day 1 and Day 2 of the New Year. Students will celebrate the New Year with apples and honey.</i>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	<i>All classes dismissed at 11:25 a.m. for Erev (evening of) Yom Kippur (if applicable); no classes on Yom Kippur. Students will participate in age and developmentally appropriate activities around the themes of atonement and forgiveness.</i>
	Sukkot (Harvest Festival)	<i>All classes dismissed at 11:25 a.m. for Erev (evening of) Sukkot; no classes on Day 1 and Day 2 of Sukkot. Depending on when the holiday falls, students will have lunch in a sukkah. Some classes will visit the sukkahs of their classmates and the major shuls.</i>
	Hoshanah Rabah, Shemini Atzeret and Simhat Torah	<i>Classes in session on Hoshana Rabah; no classes on Shemini Atzeret and Simhat Torah. Classes will engage in activities celebrating having read the entire Torah.</i>
	Individual Student Photos	<i>Retakes available in November. This photo will be used in the VTT yearbook.</i>
	Thanksgiving	<i>Canadian statutory holiday. All schools closed.</i>
	Provincial Professional Development Day	<i>Every October, teachers throughout the province gather for professional development at venues throughout the city. No classes scheduled at any public, private or independent schools.</i>
	Grade 7 Trip to Winnipeg	<i>A special trip to visit the Canadian Museum of Human Rights.</i>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Individual Photo Retakes	<i>Please pay attention to announced deadlines should you wish a photo retake.</i>
	Early Years Open House	<i>For families wishing to learn about our excellent Early Years and Senior Kindergarten program. Current families welcome to attend.</i>
	Professional Development Day	<i>Like the public system, VTT faculty have six scheduled Pro-D Days during the school year.</i>

MONTH	HOLIDAY/EVENT	ADDITIONAL INFO
NOVEMBER	Remembrance Day/Kristallnacht	<i>This is a statutory holiday. No classes in session. Either the day before or the day after the holiday, Grade 3 students lead a Remembrance Day assembly for the primary grades. Grade 6 students lead a Remembrance Day and Kristallnacht assembly for the intermediate grades.</i>
	Early Dismissal Fridays begin	<i>By moving the clocks “back,” Shabbat starts much earlier come November. School dismisses at 2:20 p.m. to allow families enough time to prepare for Shabbat. This lasts until March.</i>
	Parent-Teacher/Goal Setting Conferences (Wednesday and Thursday evening)	<i>Parents have the opportunity to meet with their children’s teachers. In the intermediate grades, students may participate in and set academic and personal goals for the year with teacher and parents present. There is no school on the Friday. No 4:30 p.m. pick up for Rishonim and JK those days: 3:20 p.m. dismissal.</i>
DECEMBER	<u>H</u> anukkah Celebration	<i>Each class will have a designated morning to celebrate <u>H</u>anukkah</i>
	<u>H</u> anukkah (Festival of Lights)	<i><u>H</u>anukkah is the only Jewish holiday that is not religious in nature thus school is in session for the duration of the festival (if it’s not during winter break). Students will engage in learning and activities related to the holiday. Look for our morning “buskers.”</i>
	School Closes for Winter Break / Report Cards Issued Online	<i>VTT closes for two weeks for winter break. Report cards can be accessed on the parent portal at <a href="http://parents.talmudtorah.com">parents.talmudtorah.com</a></i>
JANUARY	Grade 7 Roots and Wings Havdallah Evening	<i>Roots and Wings is a Grade 7 identity and family history project. Students lead a special havdallah service one evening in January to showcase their incredible masterpieces.</i>
	Professional Development Day	<i>Like the public system, VTT faculty have six scheduled Pro-D Days during the school year.</i>
	Strathcona Raffle Fundraising Begins	<i>Grade 7 students spend their final week of school at VTT at Strathcona Park and Lodge near Campbell River. Students and parents hold a raffle to help offset the cost of this memorable outdoor education program. This trip has been running for 30+ years.</i>
	Tu B’Shevat ( <i>the beginning of the new year for trees</i> )	<i>During this festival, many classrooms hold a Tu B’Shevat Seder with fruits originating from the Holy Land (the seven species). JNF often comes to VTT to do programming related to the environment.</i>
FEBRUARY	BC Family Day	<i>This is a statutory holiday. No classes in session.</i>
	Grade 2 Tefilah Breakfast	<i>Grade 2 students lead a morning prayer service for their families followed by a light breakfast--service in Hebrew!</i>
	Professional Development Day for all Jewish day school faculty	<i>Faculty from all the Jewish day schools gather for a day of professional growth and learning.</i>
	Grade 6 Shabbaton	<i>Our Grade 6 students join with students from other Jewish day schools in the Pacific Northwest/Alberta to spend a meaningful Shabbat weekend together.</i>

MONTH	HOLIDAY/EVENT	ADDITIONAL INFO
<b>MARCH</b>	Class Photos	<i>No retakes for this one! Check the exact date so your child does not miss out!</i>
	Parent-Teacher Conferences (Wednesday and Thursday evening)	<i>Parents have the opportunity to meet with their children's teachers to discuss student progress. There is no school on the Friday.</i>
	Purim	<i>VTT holds a fun and lively Purim carnival every year. Students are expected to come to school in costume. School dismisses at 11:25 a.m.</i>
	Regular Friday Dismissal Resumes	<i>Once clocks "fall back," Shabbat ends later and VTT reverts to a regular 3:20 p.m. dismissal.</i>
	VTT Spring Musical	<i>All students in Grades 5 through 7 are welcome to audition and participate. All students are given a role. Performances take place during three evenings, with one matinee, at the JCC Norman Rothstein Theatre.</i>
<b>APRIL</b>	School closes for Passover Break	<i>VTT's Spring Break. School is closed for two weeks in concert with the holiday. Prior to Passover, classes learn the holiday rituals and hold classroom Seders. VTT parents prepare all the required food.</i>
	Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day)	<i>Grade 7 students lead an assembly for intermediate grades to mark this sombre anniversary.</i>
	Professional Development Day	<i>Like the public system, VTT faculty have six scheduled Pro-D Days during the school year.</i>
<b>MAY</b>	Yom Hazikaron (Israeli Remembrance Day)	<i>Grade 7 students lead an assembly for intermediate grades to remember our fallen Israeli soldiers.</i>
	Yom Ha'atzma'ut (Israel Independence Day)	<i>This day is dedicated to celebrating the establishment of the State of Israel. Israeli-themed activities occur throughout the day.</i>
	Lag Ba'Omer (a festival commemorating the passing of the great sage and mystic, Shimon Bar Yochai, the author of the Zohar)	<i>To celebrate this festival, students enjoy time outdoors and picnics in nature. Grade 7 students often organize a 5KM run to Kits Beach to raise money for their teen philanthropy program.</i>
	Victoria Day	<i>This is a statutory holiday. No classes in session.</i>
	Professional Development Day	<i>Like the public system, VTT faculty have six scheduled Pro-D Days during the school year.</i>
	Discovery Day	<i>All incoming Senior Kindergarten students and their families are invited to a morning open house as a prelude to September.</i>

Did you know that VTT's Google calendar can be downloaded and synched to your computer or mobile device? When in doubt, rely on our web-based calendar. Go to [talmudtorah.com/calendar](http://talmudtorah.com/calendar) for instructions.

MONTH	HOLIDAY/EVENT	ADDITIONAL INFO
<b>JUNE</b>	Shavuot ( <i>celebrating the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai</i> )	<i>No classes on Day 1 and Day 2 of Shavuot. Students engage in activities related to the Ten Commandments.</i>
	Yom Maccabiyah (Sports Day)	<i>Students in Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7 represent their house teams and participate in an afternoon of friendly competition.</i>
	Grade 6 Interfaith Shabbat Kiddush	<i>After interviewing people of different faiths, Grade 6 students invite their interviewees to enjoy a Shabbat kiddush at VTT.</i>
	Grade 7 MVP (Mitzvah of Valuing Philanthropy) Ceremony of Giving	<i>As part of their Tikkun Olam (repair of the world) studies, students invite selected non-profits agencies to receive a monetary allocation (raised by the students) at a ceremony marking the conclusion of their first philanthropic endeavour.</i>
	Grade 1 Siddur (Prayer) Celebration	<i>Parents are invited to spend a morning marvelling at their children's Hebrew language skills as well as first set of learned Jewish prayers. All students given an official Siddur. This prayer book will remain with them for the duration of their years at Talmud Torah.</i>
	Grade 2 Torah Celebration	<i>Grade 2 students will demonstrate their knowledge of Torah--all in Hebrew--to their parents! Students receive a mini Torah as a memento.</i>
	Senior Kindergarten Siyyum Conclusion Ceremony	<i>Parents, relatives and friends are invited to celebrate the conclusion of Senior Kindergarten. Through song and dance, students display their growth and learning.</i>
	Junior and Senior Band Spring Concert	<i>An opportunity for our band students in Grade 4 to 7 to showcase their progress.</i>
	Annual Rishonim and Junior Kindergarten Picnic	<i>Students and their families meet at Maple Grove Park for a final gathering and goodbye.</i>
	Grade 7 Outdoor Education Trip to Strathcona Park and Lodge	<i>This is a much anticipated conclusion to the Talmud Torah journey for Grade 7s. For five days our students challenge themselves personally and physically and bond with their classmates for one last hurrah!</i>
	Year End Assembly	<i>Students in Senior Kindergarten to Grade 7 gather for one last school assembly. It is here we say goodbye to retiring teachers and recognize exceptional student service, athleticism and artistic skills.</i>
	Grade 7 Graduation	<i>Rarely a dry eye in the house at this graduation ceremony. For many of our students they have spent a decade with us. Every student is recognized and celebrated, having the opportunity to offer a personal reflection. Graduation closes with a lovely dessert reception hosted by Grade 6 parents.</i>

## A VANCOUVER TALMUD TORAH GRADUATE WILL

- V** **Value** a life that is informed by Torah, as well as Jewish traditions, rituals and culture and develop a strong moral compass grounded in Jewish ethics and teachings.
- T** **Take** responsibility for self, family and community and will understand their obligation to foster and model the principles of Tikkun Olam as proud members of K'lal Yisrael (the Jewish community).
- T** **Think** critically, continuing to develop analytical and problem-solving skills, while applying a love of learning to the lifelong pursuit of knowledge and new ideas.