

HILLEL ACADEMY



TEACHER HANDBOOK

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SECTION I: PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF HILLEL ACADEMY

INTRODUCTION

Hillel Academy is a private, co-educational, non-denominational school that provides an opportunity for the total development of the child in a continuous educational programme from the age of three years. The programme begins in the Preparatory School with Pre-Kindergarten continuing through High School and up to Pre-University 6th form.

Hillel Academy is a non profit-making institution overseen by the Jewish Community in Jamaica through four Trustees appointed by the Directors of the United Congregation of Israelites. The Trustees are responsible for the appointment of a Board of Governors whose responsibility it is to manage the overall policy of the School within the bounds of the Trust Deed.

MISSION STATEMENT

Hillel Academy, in partnership with students, staff and parents, strives to achieve the fullest development of each student's potential and talents.

We seek to create a disciplined community of lifelong learners with sound moral values through the provision of a well-rounded curriculum delivered by a dynamic, highly-trained staff.

PHILOSOPHY

Hillel Academy strives to fulfil the motto "Learning for Living" by providing an education that will equip its students for life. This is achieved through the development of their intellectual, emotional and physical needs. Individual differences, special characteristics and needs of students are recognized, accepted and encouraged to help them to develop a positive and active understanding of themselves and their social responsibilities.

GOALS

To fulfill the overall philosophy, the programme is designed to achieve the following:

- Achieve and maintain high academic standards in all subject areas.
- Develop the necessary fundamental skills and processes essential for lifelong acquisition and use of knowledge.
- Provide opportunities for our students to graduate with an appreciation for the visual and performing arts.
- Encourage the development of the positive emotional, moral and social skills necessary for our students to become productive and successful human beings.
- Provide and support the development of skills in physical activities and instill a lifelong appreciation for healthy forms of recreation and physical fitness.

- Provide opportunities for students to learn how to be responsible, contributing citizens of their own School and community as well as of the wider community and the world.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn how to respect others who have different backgrounds and customs and to appreciate cultural diversity.
- Provide opportunities for each student to understand and practice proper stewardship of the earth.
- Provide opportunities and support for each student to develop and practice a high standard of moral conduct.

SECTION II: RELIGIOUS POLICY

JEWISH HOLY DAYS

The origin of the School, its foundation and support by the Jewish community in Jamaica will be demonstrated to new students and their parents as part of the orientation procedure.

Certain Jewish Holy Days will be observed to honour the Founders by the School being closed on those days and their significance explained to the students. No activities will be held after 5:00 p.m. on the evening prior to Holy Days.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

No activities may be organized by the School after 5:00 p.m. on Friday evenings nor on Saturday and Sunday mornings before 12:00 NOON.

This regulation shall not apply to any function organized by other bodies to which the School is invited to take part. In these cases if the team has any member whose religious observance takes place during the time of the function, it shall be the duty of the Principal to try to have the appearance of the team set for another time, or the permission of the parents be obtained. In all cases the former should be tried first.

The Director shall have the authority to vary this regulation if in her/his opinion the School would not be available at any other time.

Functions marking major religious festivals which are not controversial or in conflict with any particular faith may be observed as expressions of the School's recognition of cultural and historical events and beliefs. These underline the School's stated position as an international School which celebrates cultural diversity and harmony. Carol/Chanukah Hour in December is one such example; the celebration of different nationalities during Heritage Week is another.

Hillel Academy is a non-denominational school and does not proselytize or promote any particular religion. Whenever prayers, hymns or Bible readings are used in assembly, class meditation or at any School function no phrase which identifies with any particular religion may be used. In all cases the word "God" is used to denote the Deity.

If students are asked to offer a prayer, the teacher will provide the child with appropriate guidance.

SECTION III: GENERAL SCHOOL REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

PAYMENT OF FEES FOR TUITION AND BOOKS

Payment vouchers are issued to the parents and guardians of students for the tuition fees and to purchase books. Fees may be paid at any branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia or at Hillel Academy.

Returning students are required to pay fees by the first day of each term.

One term's fees are payable in lieu of one term's notice of withdrawal of a student. Report cards, progress reports and recommendations will be withheld until all fees are paid.

THE SCHOOL YEAR

The School year shall be divided into three terms, for payment purposes only, as follows:

- Term 1 – Christmas Term
- Term 2 – Easter Term
- Term 3 – Summer Term

LOG BOOK

A Log Book is kept by the Principal.

The following shall be entered in the Log Book:

A report of the absence of any teacher from the institution for any period not less than one hour or the illness of any teacher of the institution on a School day.

A report of any interruption of work during the School day, on the day which such interruptions occur.

Statements made by any member of the Board, persons authorized by the Minister or his representative and other visitors to the institution.

All cases of minor breaches of the regulations, absence and lateness etc., with the teacher's knowledge.

Any event of significance e.g., visits to the School from government ministries, members of the diplomatic corps and staff meetings with the Board.

SCHOOL CLOSURE AND EARLY DISMISSALS

CAMPUS POLICY

In the event that School is cancelled, announcements will be made to give as much notice as possible. The “Emergency Tree” will also be utilized to notify parents individually.

Regular dismissal is according to the daily schedule. Unless students have a scheduled after-School activity on campus, they should be collected promptly

A student may leave before the end of the regular School only at the discretion of the Principal or Director.

Students must stay on the School grounds from the time they arrive, even if the first period has not yet started, until dismissal.

In the event that a student must leave during the School day for medical appointments, prior arrangements should be made with the Principal. If a parent wishes to take the student out of School early or for a short period, permission must be sought from the Principal in writing or in person, and in advance whenever possible.

HOMEWORK

Assignments should be corrected promptly and carefully and returned to students so that feedback is as immediate as possible. Homework should be checked by the teacher.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Field trips are an integral part of the instructional programme. Parents are required to sign a permission slip for each field trip.

Students will not be allowed to participate unless the permission slip is signed. Parents may be required to pay transportation fees and any other expenses.

HOUSE SYSTEM

The house system is an integral part of School life. Much of the enjoyment of School life and the encouragement of school spirit rely on its healthy, keen and imaginative competition.

Every student and teacher is assigned randomly to a house. Houses are led by a Housemistress/master and captained by Senior students. All academic and athletic achievements earn House points, and unsatisfactory performance may also cost the house points. House meetings are held on a regular basis and attendance is required by all students and staff.

TEXTBOOKS AND CLASS MATERIALS

PREP SCHOOL

The School operates a book purchasing system.

Kindergarten 2– Grade 6 Some books are provided by the School. Students pay a book fee which covers the purchase of the consumable books not provided by the School,

Class materials: Exercise books are supplied by the School.

HIGH SCHOOL

Textbooks are purchased by the students.

Students are required to provide their own class materials such as pencils, pens, stationery etc.

SECTION IV: HEALTH & SAFETY

All students and staff are covered by an Accident Insurance Policy provided by Sagacor Life. Students and staff are covered on the School premises, en route to and from School, and while participating in or being transported to a School sponsored activity under the direct supervision of proper School authority.

TREATMENT OR ACCIDENT/ILLNESS

The School Nurse deals with minor illnesses and injuries. At her discretion and in consultation with the Principal, parents are asked to collect their child should the child need to go home or to a doctor.

If the parent cannot be reached or if immediate treatment is necessary, the child's family doctor will be contacted.

The child may be taken to the family doctor or to Andrews Memorial Hospital at the discretion of the School Nurse and in consultation with the Principal.

It is important that the office be notified of changes of family doctors promptly. In cases of accidents during supervised activities, the teacher in charge is responsible to take necessary action. A calm approach is best. If the injured student cannot manage to go alone, another student will be sent with him/her to the School Nurse. Classes should not be left unattended, and teachers should go only in an emergency situation. In case of severe injury, send a student for the School Nurse and a note to the Principal or in the Principal's absence, the teacher in charge.

If such an accident occurs on the playing field, as indicated, moving the child should be avoided if at all possible. However, removal to a shaded area and a reclining position may be undertaken if the seriousness of the injury does not prevent it.

In cases of serious injury, the teacher in charge and/or the School Nurse should submit a written report giving the extent of injuries, and a brief description of how, when and under what circumstances the accident occurred, to the Principal as soon as is conveniently possible. The Principal will send a copy to the Director immediately.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS (Please see Emergency Procedures Handbook)

SECTION V: DISCIPLINE

GENERAL

Teachers are primarily responsible for the good order and discipline of the students in the classrooms, on the School grounds on field trips, etc. Principals and Senior Teachers/Department Heads under the direction of the Director are responsible for developing and implementing disciplinary policy through the teaching staff. In order to accomplish this they must be consistent and supportive of their teachers.

The discipline in the School is the concern of all members of the staff at all times. Students must feel that the team of staff and prefects are aware at all times of student activities and that they are quick to correct, as well as praise those aspects of their activities which affect the discipline of the School. Good discipline depends to a large extent upon the example and leadership of staff and prefects and on adequate prior preparations for classes and activities.

Each and every student is expected to adhere to high personal standards of behaviour, as outlined in our Student-Parent Handbook, to care for their fellow students and to realize that good study habits are essential.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

The classroom teacher is expected to handle the discipline in the classroom. The teacher is the person primarily responsible for the good order in the classroom, and is, therefore, obligated to handle to the best of his/her ability all the problems that develop there. Before referring a student to administrative personnel, the teacher is expected to exhaust reasonable efforts and resources in dealing with disciplinary problems. He/she should develop sensitivity to and an awareness of problems before they become large enough to require administrative attention.

Teachers, in consultation with their Department Heads or Grade Coordinator, should decide when it is appropriate and useful to call or arrange a meeting with parents.

Teachers may refer disciplinary cases of a serious nature to the Grade Coordinator, Guidance Coordinator, Head of Department or Principal. Teachers are not expected to spend time in class arguing with a student. Nor is any teacher expected to take abuse, verbal or otherwise from a student.

If a teacher deems it necessary to remove a child from the classroom, either to maintain control of the class or to protect the rights and safety of the group, he/she must send the students with someone to the Principal.

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS (Please see Student-Parent Handbook)

HILLEL ACADEMY

The Professional Job Description of All Hillel Academy Teachers

ALL TEACHERS ARE REQUIRED TO:

- Respect and promote the Mission Statement, Philosophy and Objectives of the School.
- Demonstrate professionalism by recognising that, on occasions, duties will extend beyond the normal school day. Such duties will include early morning and after school duties, in-service training, workshops, Grade Meetings, Parent/Teacher Consultations, Staff Meetings, Curriculum Evenings, Field Trips and extra-curricular activities. All teachers are required to offer one activity per week to enrich the School's extra-curricular programme.
- Present a professional image at all times within the school community.
- Communicate promptly with colleagues and the Principal if matters arise which cause concern in connection with the schoolwork or conduct of students.
- Ensure that the Principal is kept fully informed of discussions with parents in connection with the schoolwork or conduct of students.
- All teachers are required to reflect a professional image by the standard of their dress.
- Read and use the Staff Handbook and curriculum documentation.
- Determine professional growth plans for the current academic year, recognising that these will form part of the appraisal process.
- Create a stimulating, welcoming and attractive classroom environment.
- Ensure students are individually challenged to reach their full potential.
- Maintain firm but fair discipline and enforce school rules and regulations at all times.
- Keep up-to-date and appropriate records of student progress and assessment.
- Liaise with Resource staff and subject specialist staff where necessary.
- Participate pro-actively in Department / Grade Level meetings and activities.
- Teachers must check emails daily and update their SIS Notice Boards daily.
- All teachers must update their computer skills to utilize the SIS programme effectively.
- Take an active part in curriculum evaluation and development.

ALL TEACHERS' WORKDAY

1. The workday for all full-time teachers is normally from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., except when they are undertaking afternoon activities or duties according to a roster.
2. Part-time teachers are expected to arrive in adequate time to prepare for their classes.
3. Attendance/punctuality/absence:
 - a. All teachers shall sign in as soon as they arrive at school. Teachers are required to set a good example to their students by arriving punctually and fully prepared for class.
 - b. Teachers must remain in their assigned areas or classroom at all times except for extreme emergencies, e.g. if called by office for an emergency telephone call. Teachers who leave classes unattended will be responsible for any incident/accident occurring during their absence.
 - c. Leave of absence will only be granted with prior approval of the Director. Applications should be submitted through the Principal. Failure to do so will be considered a serious breach of the regulations.
 - d. A teacher must take all reasonable steps to notify the Principal of his/her illness within the first working day of its occurrence and, if the period exceeds two working days, to submit a certificate from a registered medical practitioner.
 - e. Staff will be expected to substitute for colleagues. However, in cases of prolonged absence, the Administration will make every effort to employ a substitute.
 - f. In all cases of absence, lesson plans and class assignments must be available for standbys or substitutes.

DUTIES

- Form teachers will keep a daily attendance register for all their classes. Students are required to be punctual and to have good attendance. Lateness and absence should be recorded every day.
- Teachers are responsible for the welfare of the students in their care and are therefore expected to know each of them very well academically, and behaviourally, paying particular attention to their social adjustment.

To be successful this relationship calls for a thorough understanding of the student's strengths and weaknesses and interests.

- Teachers are required to prepare effective Lesson Plans for all classes, taking into account students' differentiated needs. The Unit Planner will be used by all teachers across the school as the basis of lesson plans.
- They should maintain up-to-date written records of student progress and ensure that these are available for consultation on a day-to-day basis.
- Copies of Lesson Plans are to be submitted to the Department Head on a weekly basis.
- Teachers should mark students' work sensitively, yet thoroughly, in keeping with the general guidelines in all school handbooks and the specific guidelines in the Curriculum documentation.
- Teachers are responsible for seeing that grade records are correctly completed on the specified dates. All disciplinary and academic records must be kept up to date on SIS.
- They should be present at all parent/teacher conferences as scheduled and schedule individual meetings as seen necessary, in consultation with the Head of Department or Principal.
- They should ensure that all students have the appropriate text books etc. and that all books are properly maintained
- Teachers should see that rooms are kept in good order at all times. They should check regularly to ensure that classrooms are properly equipped i.e. furniture, fittings etc. and report to the Principal any discrepancies or items in need of repair or replacement.
- Students must be monitored and supervised by a staff member at all times. Teachers are accountable for their students, and should assist in the monitoring of all students in the school. Teachers who leave students unattended will be held liable for any accident occurring during their absence. No student in Prep School may ever be left unattended in a school classroom or facility. Playground and lunchroom supervision includes being present for the entire allotted time, supervising orderly queuing to and from the area, monitoring cleanliness, behavior and language of the students.

All teachers shall be evaluated according to the regulations in the appraisal handbook.

SECTION VI: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES PERTAINING TO TEACHERS

THE CODE OF ETHICS

All members of staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains the dignity of themselves, their colleagues and the ethical standards of the teaching profession and the School.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

The Administration recognizes the right of the teachers to have a Staff Association for professional and social purposes. Meetings of the Association are to be held at times when they will not interfere with instruction and supervision. The Director and the Senior Management Team should meet regularly to discuss matters relevant to the Association.

DRESS CODE

Teachers must be appropriately dressed, and uphold the standards of the teaching profession and the School at all times. Appropriate dress must be business informal or, smart casual.

For women: A reasonable length skirt (no mini length) or ankle length trousers (no jeans) combined with a top (such as a dress shirt, polo, or sweater set) is considered acceptable. Dresses, with an appropriate skirt length, are also acceptable. Art teachers and teachers of lower Prep School children may wear appropriate jeans.

For men: A combination of a collared shirt, trousers with a belt, and modest shoes with socks is generally acceptable.

A blazer or business jacket may be added for both male and female staff members.

Footwear should be comfortable, for the amount of standing done, but must also be smart (not casual e.g. no slippers or Crocs).

Any member of staff clothed in a manner considered inappropriate will be requested to return home to change into appropriate clothing.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE USAGE

The manner in which students, parents and colleagues communicate is extremely important in order to maintain mutual respect and cordial relations. All parent calls should be responded to within Twenty four (24) hours.

Whilst recognizing that 'Patois' is part of the Jamaican culture, during School standard English must be used at all times except when used for dramatic performance. Command of the English language is one of the main ingredients for successful performance in all subject areas. The Board Policy 3.11 shall be the guide to best practice.

SCHOOL PHONE

The School reserves the right to claim payment through salary deduction for personal calls.

LEAVING THE CAMPUS

All teachers leaving the campus for any reason during working hours should first obtain the permission of the, Principal or the Director in the absence of the Principal. The teacher should then *sign out* indicating the time of departure and *sign in* on return indicating time of return.

CODE OF REGULATIONS

APPOINTMENT OF TEACHERS

WORK PERMITS

Teachers appointed who require Work Permits are given the same terms and conditions as those laid down for all other staff members.

A Work Permit is not considered to be a contract of employment and cannot supersede the rules and regulations of the School or any contractual agreement therein. For the benefit of those teachers who require work permits, the permit may be revoked at any time for sufficient cause subject to the terms and conditions as laid down in the relevant regulations.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The conditions of employment are as specified in the Letter of Appointment which all teachers are required to sign upon confirmation of an offer of employment.

APPOINTMENT/TENURE/TERMINATION

The appointment of the Director and Principals will be made by the Board of Directors.

The appointment of the Financial Controller and Business Manager will be made by the Director and ratified by the Board.

All other appointments will be made by the Principals and Director

The School may terminate the employment of any staff member at any time without notice or payment in lieu of notice in the event of gross misconduct on the part of the staff member.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Performance Appraisals, in accordance with clearly stated procedures, will be carried out systematically. Portfolio assembly is mandatory for all staff.

The School's performance Appraisal Programme is one of the main determinants in considering the extension or termination of contracts and the planning of Professional Development activities and opportunities.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Minor breaches of the regulations will be dealt with by the respective Principals and the Director who may take any action deemed necessary.

At no time should the airing of a grievance interfere with the teaching process.

A teacher may have disciplinary action taken against him/her for the following:

- improper conduct while in School
- neglect of duty
- inefficiency
- irregular attendance
- persistent tardiness
- lack of discipline
- lack of communication with administration or parents
- such other conduct as may be deemed professional misconduct

Charges of grave misconduct may lead to the following actions being taken:

- Verbal or written warning
- Deduction of pay where appropriate in the case of absence
- Immediate Termination

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE:

In the case of a Principal, the Business Manager or Financial Controller, the Director may do so with the approval of the Board or of any committee appointed by the Board for this purpose. Pending the obtaining of such approval, the Director may suspend the officer without pay as from the date when the misconduct occurred or from any subsequent date which the Director may consider appropriate.

In any other case, the Director, in consultation with the Principal, may do so with his/her best judgment.

Any dismissal may be effective as from the date when the misconduct occurred or from any subsequent date, which the Director or the Board may consider appropriate.

Teachers who may have a complaint or grievance arising out of a decision made by the Director, may refer the complaint or grievance in writing to the Board within fourteen days of the decision date.

Any such complaint or grievance made in accordance with the immediately preceding paragraph may be determined by the Board for this purpose.

At the hearing of any such complaint or grievance the teacher shall be entitled to representation by any two of the following: a friend or by any attorney-at-law or an officer of Hillel Academy Teachers Association (HATA).

SALARY SCALES & ALLOWANCES

SALARY CATEGORIES

There will be three salary categories:

- Teachers' Assistant - CXC or "O" Level Certificate or
- Teachers' College Certificate or Diploma (T.T.)
- Graduate Teacher - General or Honours Degree (G)
- Trained Graduate Teacher - Diploma and Degree (TG.) or Degree

All categories will have the same number of increments as set out in the Government scales.

A Master's degree earns three (3) increments if the content of the degree is related to the subject being taught or to education.

MEDICAL SCHEME

The School contributes to a medical scheme and teachers are eligible for membership in accordance with the prevailing Schedule of Benefits and the School's contribution towards the premiums.

PENSION SCHEME

The School operates a contributory superannuation scheme and it is compulsory that employees join with effect from satisfactory completion of the probationary period, provided that they are eligible. The normal contribution to this scheme will be at the rate of 5% of salary.

Teachers are required to retire at age 65 but may be re-employed on an annual contractual basis after this time if mutually satisfactory to the teacher and the School.

Retired teachers are usually not eligible for Positions of Responsibility.

Teachers are advised to give notice of their date of prescribed retirement at least three months before the effective date. This is necessary in order to facilitate timely preparation of the required forms to be passed for pension purposes and avoidance of undue delay.

REDUCED SCHOOL FEES

Teachers are eligible for a fifty percent (50%) discount on Tuition fees for up to two biological or legally adopted children attending Hillel Academy.

LEAVE FACILITIES

Vacation leave: Teaching staff - 10 weeks per year during non teaching calendar time. Teachers are required to attend work for a certain number of non-teaching weeks for curriculum development and other professional duties.

Sick Leave: Up to 10 working days paid leave per year. The teacher, however, is required to notify his/her Principal within the first working day, and if the period exceeds three working days to furnish a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating that he/she is ill and specifying the period during which he/she will be unable, by reason of his/her illness, to perform his/her duties.

Maternity Leave

Maternity leave will be granted to female teachers only after one year's service at Hillel Academy and in accordance with the Maternity Leave Act. Currently, the Act provides that the employee is entitled to be granted "maternity leave for the period or periods during which she is absent from work wholly or partly because of pregnancy or confinement, but shall not, except in the special cases mentioned in the Act, exceed twelve weeks in respect of each pregnancy and be paid maternity pay in respect of the first eight weeks of her maternity leave".

CODE OF ETHICS/PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All teachers are expected to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence, and always uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of the teaching profession in order to further the welfare of the students entrusted to their care.

Teachers should studiously avoid unfavourable criticism of an associate except when made to the proper officials and only after the associate has been informed of the nature of the criticism.

No group of teachers or any teacher purporting to speak on behalf of a group of teachers may make representation to Government, its members or officials or any other authority on matters affecting the interests of teachers employed to the School, or advocating a change in educational policy without the knowledge and consent of the Director acting on behalf of the Board.

The teacher must discuss with their Principal and Director information received in confidence or in the course of professional duties where it affects the best interest of a student.

Teachers must not use their professional position for personal profit by using any method of coercion or pressure in offering or services to their students or parents.

Teachers must speak to and act towards students in a respectful and dignified manner.

IN RELATION TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Teachers must not engage in employment outside of their regular contract where the employment adversely affects their professional status or impairs their standing with students, associates or the community. Any employment outside of Hillel Academy must be approved by their Principal and Director.

Teachers must conduct themselves in such a manner as to maintain the prestige of the profession, that no dishonour or disgrace may befall them in their profession, or the institution in which they are employed.

ALL TEACHERS ARE REQUIRED TO READ AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOKS.