



UNITED HERZLIA SCHOOLS

בתיה"ס המאוחדים הרצליה

PARENT/SCHOOL CHARTER

An optimal educational experience for our children requires an interactive partnership among parents, educators and children. Both educators and parents hope that every school day is filled with learning and joy. In acknowledgement of the collaborative relationship between parents and educators, the school recognises these fundamental principles of communication which are for the good of the children and for the good of the school.

Principles of Communication

- Mutually respectful approach
- Ongoing and effective communication
- Resolution to gather information/data from appropriate sources prior to forming an opinion and making a judgement
- Recognition of the power of words and avoidance of harmful speech
- Effective listening, acknowledging the legitimacy of differing opinions
- Clearly defined lines of responsibility
- An agreed-upon process for solving problems
- Recognition of specific roles in the process
- Mutual trust that the process is just and fair
- Well-defined, clear boundaries
- Shared commitment to work together towards a solution
- Appropriate use of social media as a means of communication
- Raising concerns of a collective nature in a respectful manner

In an effort to realise these principles in our daily interactions as a school community, we set out in this document:

- The roles of the HERZLIA School Committee, school management and PTAs
- The commitment of parents, teachers and learners

ROLES

The HERZLIA School Committee

The HERZLIA School Committee focuses on the following areas critical to the success of the school:

- The appointment and support of Directors and Principals to whom it delegates authority to manage the school;
- The development of institutional policy in order to guide the professional leadership in running the school;
- The management of and accountability for the school's finances;
- Directing the UHS's strategy and structure;
- The establishment of policies and plans consistent with the UHS's mission;
- Ensuring that the executive management implements the strategy as established from time to time;
- Ensuring that the UHS operates ethically;
- Ensuring that the UHS has adequate systems of internal and external control, both operational and financial;
- Providing information on the activities of the UHS to those entitled to have it;
- Providing for the succession of senior management.

In the conduct of its official business, the HERZLIA School Committee acts only as a whole. Individual School Committee members, including the HERZLIA School Committee Chair, have no authority to act unless specifically authorised to do so by the HERZLIA School Committee acting as a whole.

It is not the task of the HERZLIA School Committee to intervene in the daily running of the school or in its operational sphere such as appointing, evaluating or dismissing staff. This is the responsibility of school management.

School Management

Educational management and leadership of the United Herzlia Schools is headed by the Director of Education and consists of senior management including Principals, Deputies and Heads of Department.

Financial management and leadership, consisting of Finance, Administration, Risk, Facilities, Marketing and Human Resources is led by the Director of Finance and Administration.

The Management Committee is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, including such issues as curriculum development, the extramural programme, the appointment and evaluation of staff, maintenance etc.

Each Principal and management team should seek to keep parents informed of decisions and changes. This is usually accomplished by email, in newsletters and at parents meetings, as well as through other forms of communication.

It is incumbent on parents to keep themselves informed of such meetings as well as accessing the regular written communications from the school (such as weekly newsletters) in order to ensure that they are informed.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

This body consists of volunteer parents and staff.

This body provides a wide range of important services on a volunteer basis, including fundraising, good advocacy within the school community, and arranging functions and catering.

Part of the PTAs function is to oversee many different portfolios at the school, drawing on various interests and areas of expertise from the parent body.

The PTAs constitution makes clear its procedures and role as a service organisation. This constitution clearly states each association's mission to support the decisions and policies of the School Committee and management.

The PTA does not participate in policymaking, nor does it function as a lobbying group (although the Principal may use it as a sounding board from time to time).

The Principal should be closely involved in ensuring that the election procedures are properly managed. Co-operation and teamwork between the Principal and the PTA are crucial to the health of the school community.

It is appropriate that the PTA advertises its activities, events and achievements within the boundaries and capacity of the PTA. However, the association should play no role in the school's effort to communicate about itself within the broader scope of marketing and public relations.

COMMITMENT

Management and staff of the School are committed to:

- Upholding the mission of the United Herzlia Schools: "to encourage and assist in the advancement of education and learning in the Republic of South Africa and more particularly to promote Jewish learning and education based on Jewish national traditional lines, ensuring that no student shall be barred from such education by reason of religion, race or gender."
- Upholding and promoting the Jewish ethos.
- Upholding and promoting the policy of inclusion.
- Instilling in each individual learner a sound spiritual and moral attitude, based on the values of love, justice, compassion, respect, care, acceptance and tolerance, in accordance with the Jewish ethos.
- Developing a curriculum of excellence within which the uniqueness of each learner will be recognised.
- Setting the highest standards of endeavour and behaviour for all learners.
- Protecting the dignity of all who are a part of our school community.
- Creating a loving and caring environment for all learners.
- Fostering strong communication with parents as the basis for close co-operation.
- Conducting themselves in accordance with the code of professional conduct of the South African Council for Educators and in terms of the UHS conditions of employment.
- Listening to parents and learners, through the approved channels, and understanding any concerns raised.
- Providing the appropriate time and place for full and confidential discussion.
- Establishing reasonable expectations for solving any issues or problems.

- Establishing a written action plan for any proposed or agreed solution.
- Reporting and reviewing the action plan.
- Providing an opportunity for a parent or learner to work towards a solution.
- Recognising that:
 - parents have a depth of experience with the learner.
 - parents and educator's perspectives may justifiably differ.
 - parents have multiple time commitments.

Parents/Guardians are committed to:

- Helping and encouraging children to develop strong spiritual and moral values.
- Upholding the ideological policy of the United Herzlia Schools.
- Taking an active and supportive interest in the school's aspirations.
- Taking an active interest in their children's work and progress, and in this regard attending parents meetings.
- Supporting the ethos, values, authority and discipline of the school.
- Ensuring that children abide by the school rules.
- Reading and committing themselves to the relevant policy documents that pertain to them and their children at this school.
- Bringing their concerns to the attention of the teachers through the approved channels.
- Listening to teachers.
- Holding discussions with teachers at a time and place that permit full and confidential exploration of issues.
- Addressing concerns, whether of individual or collective nature, through direct communication with the school by:
 - email, letter or phone call to the educator
 - email, letter or phone call to the Head of Department or Subject
 - direct communication with Principal – whichever is appropriate
- Upholding the good name of the school in all forums.
- Discussing issues/concerns with the teacher concerned.
- Articulating issues/problems clearly and fully.
- Affording teachers the opportunity to work towards a solution (this will require sufficient time).
- Recognising that:
 - teachers are trained professionals.
 - teachers' perspectives may differ from parents' perspectives.
 - teachers have multiple time commitments.

Learners are committed to:

- Supporting and abiding by the school's rules and code of conduct.
- Behaving and acting in a manner which reflects the values of the school.
- Respecting, being courteous to and co-operating with teachers, other school staff, other learners and visitors, at all times.
- Attending school regularly, and on time.
- Aiming to achieve their highest standard in all areas of school life.
- Completing all homework and assignments with pride and to their highest level of competence.
- Wearing the correct school uniform and conforming to the school's uniform policy regarding personal appearance.
- Respecting the feelings and property of other people, both at school and in the community.
- Caring for the buildings, furniture, equipment and grounds of the school.

GENERAL

While parents may not agree with every decision made by the school, in most cases, the parent and school will find enough common ground to continue a mutually respectful relationship. In an extreme case, however, an impasse may be so severe that the parent cannot remain a constructive member of the school community. In such cases, both the parent and the school should consider whether another school would be a better match for the family.

Parents best support a school climate of trust and respect by communicating concerns timeously, openly and constructively to the staff member closest to the problem. Efforts by parents to lobby other parents will be viewed by the school as counterproductive. In any event, if a concern is legitimate, the school will address it with the same vigour whether it is raised by one or a multitude of parents.

The absence of a specific guideline in this Charter does not relieve an individual of her or his responsibility to behave in what would be considered a fair and reasonable manner in all situations related to the school.

14 June 2011