

# 92NY NURSERY SCHOOL



# PARENT HANDBOOK 2022/23

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Welcome to the 92NY Nursery School. The purpose of this handbook is to explain many of the School's policies and procedures and to provide you with day-to-day practical information.

Please read it and share it with anyone who cares for your child. We hope you will refer to the handbook throughout the year.

We feel privileged to share such an important time in your children's lives. Our goal is to have things run as smoothly as possible for everyone. We thank you in advance for your support and partnership.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the school administration. We look forward to a wonderful year ahead.

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## STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Since 1938, 92NY Nursery School has provided a warm and creative atmosphere that fosters young children's imagination, curiosity and intellect. Our program facilitates children's social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth through a curriculum attuned to children's unique patterns of development. We believe children learn best in a well-organized program that emphasizes creative expression, provides opportunities for play, and encourages respect for others. Our goal is for children to become responsible members of their classroom community, as well as develop confidence and independence. We are committed to building a strong sense of community between parents, teachers and children. We firmly believe that communication between parents and the school is essential in fostering young children's growth. The celebration of Shabbat and Jewish holidays teaches children the joys of Jewish culture and heritage while strengthening the bonds of our community.

## GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

The program goals are based upon the school's educational philosophy; and, an underlying respect for the individual child. Children learn by doing, and play is the medium through which children explore the world, learning about themselves and others in the process. Emergent curriculum based on children's interests and thematic units are developed to encourage children to explore new concepts and expand their knowledge of the world around them. The curriculum is designed to provide experiences which support children's natural curiosity and provide opportunities for children and teachers to discover and learn together. Teachers are strongly encouraged to observe and assess the interests of the children and provide activities and opportunities for them to explore as independently as possible. The goals of the program are to embrace each individual child, their family unit, and caregivers and provide a warm, nurturing community in which children can grow. This approach allows children the opportunity to experience success and satisfaction with their own growing abilities.

## 92NY CODE OF CONDUCT

In an effort to provide an enjoyable, effective, safe and secure environment for all of our patrons and employees, everyone is expected to conduct themselves in a manner that respects others and does not impede, endanger, bully or harass anyone partaking in programs, classes, or services offered by The 92nd Street Y, New York (92NY). 92NY expects everyone to conduct himself/herself, whether adult or child, in a manner in keeping with his/her level of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of anyone in the 92NY community.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**The 92nd Street Y, New York  
Nursery School**  
1395 Lexington Avenue  
6th Floor  
New York, NY 10128

**Main office number:**  
212.415.5532

### *Administration*

**Malka Lowenstein**  
Paulson Director  
MLowenstein@92NY.org

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## FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

### *Transition and adjustment period*

In order to encourage a relaxed, secure adjustment to school, our phase-in schedule during the first week offers children time to adjust to school. Children will come to school in small groups for gradually lengthening periods of time. Although some children may adapt easily, it is advantageous for the whole class to begin the school year in this way. You will receive the phase-in schedule for your child's class prior to the start of school.

If your child is clingy and won't let go, try to relax, as your child will surely sense your nervousness. It will take time for some children to trust their new teachers. Children know they are coming to "school," but they may have little or no concept of what school is all about. Remember, the teachers will help you with any separation difficulty you may encounter, and will work with you to formulate an individual plan, if needed. Be patient. We will be there to support you and your child.

### *Helpful hints about saying goodbye*

- Prior to and at the start of school, speak positively to your child about school and read books about starting school.
- When it is time to leave, don't hesitate; say goodbye quickly.
- Smile and take a deep breath.
- Do not ask your child permission to leave—a definite "I'm leaving now" is most helpful to your child. Let your child know you'll be back later.
- ALWAYS say goodbye to your child—never sneak away. Do not expect a good-bye in return.

### *Toilet-training and independence*

Although children who are under 3-years-old are not required to be toilet-trained, our hope is that by the time they are 3, children are in the process of becoming toilet-trained. Please inform us of where your child is in the toilet-training process so that we can support your efforts. Bathroom time is an important part of the school experience. Using real words like "bathroom" or "toilet" and watching classmates often encourages children to give up diapers. Please do not send children who are not yet trained in pull-ups, as they are difficult to change. Several pairs of underpants should be sent to school for newly trained children. Please check that your child's diaper does not need changing before you drop your child off at school.

In order to foster children's continued growth towards independence, it is important to think of them as preschool children. As they grow beyond the toddler years, expectations need to change. Putting on clothes and cleaning up toys are some of the things you can work on which will help the adjustment to school. These things take time and need to be broken down and repeated for children to master. Drinking from a cup (not a sippy-cup), moving from a crib to a bed and encouraging walking versus using strollers are appropriate goals for preschool-age children. Keep in mind that these things should not be done simultaneously or when children are going through any other big change.

## PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

The family and school relationship is an essential part of a child's meaningful experience at school. It is very important to keep the school informed of any changes in your child's life, such as a new caregiver, a new sibling, a death or illness in the family, a parental trip or a move. The more we are familiar with your child and your family, the better able we are to be supportive and helpful. Likewise, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to the teachers or the school administrators. Be assured that all information is handled confidentially. Please be sure to read all information sent home from school. If parents do not reside in the same home, we will make every effort to ensure that school communications are sent to both parents. Please help us by supplying the appropriate information.

In order to maintain a professional relationship, our school policy does not permit teachers to babysit, tutor, attend birthday parties or have playdates with the children. In addition, we ask that you not text with the teachers, nor reach out to them on social media apps. Please do not put our teachers in the uncomfortable position of having to say no to you or your child.

You will receive a weekly email about school-wide events, meetings, holidays, 92NY programs, and parenting resources.

### *Brightwheel App*

The school uses the Brightwheel app as a primary means of communication. Please be aware that teachers will not check the app frequently during the school day, as their focus will be on your children. They will check the app for communication from families before school, prior to dismissal, and after school.

Your child's teachers will send a weekly newsletter via Brightwheel, as well as photos and videos of classroom activities. In order to protect the privacy of each family, please do not forward photos that include other people's children.

Please use Brightwheel to notify the school if your child is sick and will be absent. Please also notify us if you are running late to school.

### *Conferences*

During the late fall and again in the early spring, school is closed for one day for conferences to discuss your child's development and progress. Additional times are also scheduled before and after school. If possible, it is important for all parents to attend. This is a time when parents and teachers share their understanding of the child in order to support development. As the need arises additional meetings can be scheduled with the teachers or directors. We ask that you make an appointment for a conference so that your time will be uninterrupted.

## SCHOOL HOURS

### **Purple Room**

Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### **Sun Room**

Monday-Friday 9:15 am - 12:15 pm

### **Orange Room**

Monday-Thursday 9:15 am - 1:15 pm

Friday 9:15 am - 12:15 am

### **Yellow Room**

Monday-Thursday 9:15 am - 1:15 pm

Friday 9:15 am - 12:15 am

### **Rainbow Room**

Monday-Thursday 8:45 am - 1:45 pm

Friday 8:45 am - 12:15 pm

### **Silver Room**

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

### **Green Room**

Monday-Thursday 8:45 am - 1:45 pm

Friday 8:45 am - 12:15 pm

### **Blue Room**

Monday-Thursday 8:45 am - 1:45 pm

Friday 8:45 am - 12:15 pm

### **Red Room**

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

## *Arrival*

We cannot stress enough the importance of bringing your child to school on time. Children need time to adjust to the rhythm of the group and to get oriented to the classroom. Arriving on time is an important habit for all future years in school. This sends a clear message that school is important.

If you arrive at school by car, please do not double-park in front of the building. It is best to be dropped off on the corner of 91st or 92nd Street. For security and safety, cars need to wait down the street or around the corner.

Arrival will take place at the 92nd Street entrance, between Lexington Avenue and 3rd Avenue. One day a week, parents and caregivers are invited to drop their child off at the classroom door on the 6th floor. The days are as follows:

Tuesdays: Green, Purple, and Sun Room families will drop off on the 6th floor.

Wednesdays: Rainbow, Red, and Orange families will drop off on the 6th floor

Thursdays: Blue, Silver, and Yellow families will drop off on the 6th floor.

The elevators at 92NY are very busy so we ask for your patience and consideration. Please leave your stroller or scooter in the lobby when you come up to the Nursery School. They are considered a fire hazard and are not permitted on the floor. Strollers, scooters and other riding toys left in the building during school hours should be stored in the lobby. Please note that strollers and riding toys are left at your own risk.

Teachers cannot supervise the children prior to the beginning of the school day. We do have an early drop-off program. Please contact an administrator to sign up for this in advance.

## *Dismissal*

Dismissal will take place on the 6th floor at your child's classroom door. It is very important that your child be picked up on time. Teachers will not dismiss a child to anyone other than an authorized person. Please notify the teachers via the Brightwheel app if you or your caregiver will be late to pick up.

## *Playdates*

Playdates are a wonderful way to extend school friendships and help children develop social skills. We recommend that playdates be an opportunity for two children to play for an hour or two. Based on classroom observations, the teachers may be helpful in making suggestions for playdate choices. If your child has a playdate immediately after school, it is essential that we are notified in writing from both families, in order to avoid confusion at dismissal time. A Brightwheel message from each family will suffice.

## *After-school activities*

We strongly encourage you to sign up for the amazing After School activities offered at the 92NY. For questions regarding this program, please be in touch with the Director of Camp K'Ton Ton and Early Childhood Afterschool.

## HEALTH

### *Medical forms*

The NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene requires that each child have a complete, age-appropriate medical examination. **Children may not attend school unless the medical form is on file in the office prior to the start of the school year. Medical forms must be completed within the past 12 months to be valid.**

### *School absences and health guidelines*

Please use the Brightwheel app to notify your child's teacher if they will be absent. If your child has a communicable disease (eg. chicken pox, conjunctivitis, strep, impetigo, etc.), please let the Director of Operations know promptly, as we are mandated to notify families of exposed children.

All children must wash their hands thoroughly upon entering the classroom. If a child becomes ill in school, an administrator or teacher will call his/her parents so that the child can go home. Parents are asked to keep their children home from school if they have:

- A fever (or if they've had one in the previous 24-hour period)
- A heavy nasal discharge from a cold
- A persistent cough
- Fussy, cranky or atypical behavior
- A recent bout of diarrhea or vomiting
- Reddened eyes with discharge and/or crusty lashes
- A sore throat
- Had very little sleep
- Nits or lice

Children returning to school after an illness should be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play.

### *Medication*

If your child requires routine medicine during the school day, please reach out to the Director of Operations. If your child needs medication at school, explicit written instructions from your child's doctor and a parent release are required to be kept on file

### *Attendance Policy*

We strongly insist that all families keep their child home if they display any signs of illness. If we strictly adhere to this policy, it is one of the easiest ways to help keep everyone healthy. The child may only return 24 hours after symptoms have ended.

The school is licensed by the NYC Department of Mental Health and Hygiene and families will be updated when guidelines and regulations change.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### *Emergency information*

Emergency contact information for parents, caregivers, and guardians must be updated in the Brightwheel app and on the Emergency Release Form prior to the start of school. If any information changes during the year, please update the information on Brightwheel and submit an updated form to the school office. In an emergency we will attempt to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will try the other people you have specified. Please let your emergency contact know you have designated them to make decisions in case of an emergency. If an emergency involves an illness or injury that requires immediate attention, we will contact paramedics.

### *Security and evacuation*

All Nursery School families and caregivers must use the Brightwheel app to sign their children in and out of school. Parents, guardians, and caregivers will also be issued 92NY ID cards. Please present these at security when entering the building.

In the event of a fire or building evacuation, specified fire drill practices are followed. Children practice these procedures monthly throughout the school year. If we are unable to return to the building quickly we will proceed to our safe haven located at Brick Church (62 East 92nd Street). Parents will be contacted if it is necessary to change our dismissal plans.

### *Snow day policies*

The 92NY Nursery School closely follows the New York City Public School closings, but may close independently depending on the severity of the weather.

### *Food allergies*

For children who require an EpiPen, completed allergy action forms, filled out by both parents and a physician, must be submitted prior to the start of school and will be kept on file. Each year, the parents must speak with the teachers and director before school begins to review the emergency protocol.



## CLOTHING AND PLAYTHINGS

### *What to wear*

Children become more confident when they can dress themselves. Clothing should be easy for children to get on and off in order to encourage independence in dressing and toileting. Pants with elastic waistbands are particularly easy for children to handle. Please make sure all clothing is labeled clearly.

Please dress your child in clothing that is comfortable, sturdy, washable and simple so that he or she can actively participate in classroom activities. Clothing may become messy when children use materials such as paint, glue or clay. We ask that children not wear “costume” clothing to school. All children should wear clothing appropriate for the day’s weather conditions (mittens, hats, sweaters, etc.) but please do not have children wear scarves as they can get caught on outdoor play equipment. Children often have playground accidents when wearing long dresses, flip-flops and open-toed sandals during running and climbing activities. Rubber-soled shoes or sneakers are important for safety in outdoor play. If children wear rain/snow boots to school, please supply a change of shoes.

### *What to keep in school*

Please bring to school a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, shirt, pants, shoes, and sweatshirt) labeled with your child’s name. After winter vacation, check to make sure the items still fit. When dirty or wet clothing is sent home, please send back replacements the next day.

If you feel your child would benefit from having a “transitional object” at the beginning of the year, please share this with your child’s teachers and together you can strategize about what would be most appropriate.

## FOOD

**In order to insure the safety of everyone in the school community, foods brought from home must be peanut and tree-nut free.** Food is not permitted in the hallways in order to protect anyone with severe food allergies.

### *Dietary laws*

Jewish dietary laws are observed in the Nursery School for shared foods and all food provided for the children will be kosher.

### *Lunch and snack*

Children in the Orange, Yellow, Rainbow, Silver, Green, Blue, and Red Rooms remain in school for lunch Monday through Thursday. In September, they will receive a 92NY lunch bag to use each day. Lunch is a social time for the children and most children do not eat a large lunch. Food should be nutritious—and, of course, no candy or gum. Usually half a sandwich, fresh fruit and/or vegetables and a disposable drink are recommended. Yogurt, pasta, bagels or cereal are other favorites. Plan ahead with your children so they will be sure to have foods they like to eat. Lunches cannot be heated for the children. Leftover food will not be sent home, so please don’t send more food than your child is likely to eat.

Each day the school provides a small snack, such as crackers or pretzels, for the children. We ask that you send your child in with a healthy snack to accompany the one provided. Cut and prepared fruit, vegetables, or cheese sticks would be appropriate.

## HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

The holidays we celebrate in the school include Sukkot, Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Tu B’Shevat, Purim and Passover. Depending on how the calendar falls, we will also celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Shavuot. A Shabbat celebration takes place every Friday in school. We do not celebrate Halloween, Valentine’s Day, Christmas or Easter.

## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND THERAPISTS

The school has several educational consultants who have special expertise regarding the development of young children. In order to best meet the individual needs of children, our consultants, work with teachers regarding classroom strategies and advise parents. Some families work with outside specialists (i.e. speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, special educators) either privately or funded through the Department of Education. We believe it is important to work closely with these professionals in order to best support growth in the early years. Please speak with the Associate Director if you would like to consult privately with our school consultants.

If your child is receiving services such as Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy, or Occupational Therapy, please inform your child’s teachers and the Associate Director. Children benefit when all the school and outside professionals work as a team. All conversations are kept confidential. A release form must be filled out by the parent in order for us to communicate with a specialist.

## ADMISSIONS AND TUITION

### *Sibling admissions*

Siblings of enrolled and alumni children are given priority for admission to the Nursery School. The youngest child we admit must turn 2 years and 6-months-old (March birthday) by the start of the next school year. Families who are interested in applying should contact the Director of Admissions during the spring of the year before applying.

### *Billing and Tax ID Information*

Customer Care processes Nursery School tuition and is able to also to provide Tax ID letters upon request. Please email [billing@92NY.org](mailto:billing@92NY.org) for all billing questions.

### *Contracts*

Re-enrollment contracts are sent in the early winter for the following school year, provided that the current year's tuition is paid in full, the school can meet the child's needs and the family signs the re-enrollment contract and pays the non-refundable tuition deposit by the deadline.

### *Scholarships/Financial Assistance*

Scholarship assistance is available based on financial need. For more information about 92NY Nursery School Scholarships, call 212.415.5699. All information is kept strictly confidential.

### *Tuition*

Tuition is auto-billed in three payments (upon the signing of the contract, on or before May 1 and on or before September 1). Please check [92NY.org/Nursery](http://92NY.org/Nursery) for annual tuition updates.

## KINDERGARTEN ADMISSIONS PROCESS

### *Ongoing independent schools and public schools*

In early spring, parents of children who will be eligible to apply for ongoing independent schools or public schools in the coming fall will be invited to speak to the Paulson Director about the procedure.

Beginning in June, parents may make individual appointments with the Paulson Director specifically to discuss their child. Parents are responsible for updating their list of schools in writing so that we can make sure reports are sent to the appropriate schools. Each school has their own admissions process so it is best to read their websites carefully.

## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Our Parents' Association sponsors many events, activities and talks throughout the school year. Your participation not only provides a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents but also enhances your family's entire nursery school experience. Please see the additional materials from the Parents' Association to learn more about the various events and committees. This year's Parents' Association co-presidents are Lindsay Kraus and Samantha Lawi.

## 92NY AT A GLANCE

One of the many unique aspects of being a member of The 92NY Nursery School is that you are also a member of the larger organization: 92NY. Every Nursery School family will receive a complimentary Friends of 92NY membership. When you enter the Nursery School, you enter the larger and limitless universe of 92NY, and we look forward to enhancing your experience in many ways.

### *Mission*

Founded 145 years ago to serve the Jewish people, 92NY promotes individual and family development and participation in civic life within the context of Jewish values and American pluralism. As a nonprofit community and cultural center, 92NY seeks to create, provide and disseminate programs of distinction that foster the physical and mental health of human beings throughout their lives, their educational and spiritual growth and their enjoyment. 92NY reaches out beyond its core constituency of American Jews to serve people of diverse racial, religious, ethnic and economic backgrounds, seeking partnerships that leaven our programs and broaden our influence.

### *Leadership*

Jody Arnhold, Chair | Seth Pinsky, CEO | Alyse Myers, President

### *Belfer Center for Innovation and Social Impact*

The Belfer Center seeks to scale 92NY's renowned programming by leveraging the power of new and social media, cross-sector partnerships and collaboration within 92NY's diverse programming centers to strengthen and extend the reach of 92NY's core values—intellectual exploration and dialogue, community, thought leadership and innovation—as drivers of social change. The center, endowed by the Belfer family of New York City, is home to 92NY American Conversation; #GivingTuesday, the global day of giving; leadership programs including Women inPower; and a growing number of other initiatives.

### *Bronfman Center for Jewish life*

The Bronfman Center, generously endowed by the Samuel Bronfman Foundation, is at the core of 92NY's Jewish Life community. We provide a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to discover and follow pathways to meaningful, joyous and proud Jewish journeys. Offerings include Jewish learning talks and classes; ATiD Jewish Education for Kids; our flagship introductory Judaism course Derekh Torah; and holiday celebrations in a variety of settings.



### *Center for Arts, Learning & Leadership*

92NY's Center for Arts Learning & Leadership (CALL) bridges school-based learning with curated performances, readings and exhibitions at 92NY. CALL creates opportunities for K-12 students to cultivate a global perspective through the arts, nurturing an understanding and appreciation of world cultures and traditions. We are committed to ensuring that the diverse and vibrant talents of CALL students contribute to shaping 92Y's mainstage and community-based programming.

### *The Charles Simon Center for Adult Life & Learning*

The Charles Simon Center for Adult Life & Learning offers a unique blend of social, educational and cultural programs for adults at every stage of their lives. In addition to bringing the world's finest minds to 92NY's stage in its prestigious lecture series, the center, endowed by a bequest from Charles Simon, offers diverse personal growth, career development, humanities and language classes. The center also encompasses the 92Y Residence.

### *The Gilda and Henry Block School of the Arts*

The Gilda and Henry Block School of the Arts is widely regarded as one of the country's top community-based art centers. The school, endowed by Gilda and Henry Block, is comprised of the School of Music, the Harkness Dance Center, and the Art Center, which includes Fine Arts & Design, Ceramics Center and Jewelry Center. The school offers more than 400 classes a semester for all ages and all levels of expertise—from preschool to high school, from enthusiastic amateurs and emerging professionals to senior adults—all taught by a faculty of working professional artists.

### *Lillian & Sol Goldman Family Center for Youth & Family*

The Goldman Center provides programs that promote the healthy development and growth of children of all ages. From classes for parents-to-be to extensive activities for teens, the center, endowed by the Goldman Family, provides a supportive, noncompetitive environment that encourages children and families to reach their maximum potential. Center programs include the award-winning Parenting Center and new Grandparents Center, the Nursery School, 92NY After-School, and summer camps and activities for kids, including children with IEPs.

### *May Center for Health, Fitness & Sport*

The May Center for Health, Fitness & Sport provides a huge range of programs and facilities to help people of all ages maintain their physical health and wellness. Facilities include a state-of-the-art gymnastics studio and aerobic/strength conditioning studios; two gyms; a 25-yard pool, an indoor jogging track and more than 100 weekly classes. The center, endowed by Leni and Peter May, also offers specialized programs, including cardiac rehab, nutrition and women's health, as well as individual instruction and informational lectures.

### *Milstein/Rosenthal Center for Media & Technology*

Endowed in 1999 by two visionary trustees, board chairman Philip Milstein and longtime board member John Rosenthal, the Milstein/Rosenthal Center is spearheading 92Y's foray into media distribution via technology. The division is developing and implementing technology-based programs, satellite broadcasts, long-distance learning, Internet simulcasts, video conferencing and other tools that enable 92nd Street Y to extend its reach beyond its four walls to communities and constituencies around the world.

### *Tisch Center for the Arts*

Under the aegis of Tisch Center for the Arts, endowed through the generous support of the Tisch family, 92Y enjoys international stature as a source of musical and literary programs of the highest caliber. 92Y Concerts presents world-class chamber music and solo recitals, jazz, an American Songbook series and family programs. The Unterberg Poetry Center produces a renowned reading series featuring the most distinguished writers of our time and promotes the literary arts through innovative programs.

## SUPPORTING THE 92NY NURSERY SCHOOL

The life of our Nursery School - the superb programs, curriculum, teachers, array of resources, and strong community – is made possible by the generosity of our parent body and alumni. The 92NY Nursery School relies on your support to help bridge the gap between tuition and operating expenses. Financial support from our families not only helps us to maintain ongoing operations and make physical improvements to the school, but also enables us to offer enrichment programs, such as library time, music, dance, and gymnastics to your children. Your support funds scholarships and allows us to attract highly qualified teachers and consultants. Your gifts are vital to our ability to provide ongoing enrichment opportunities for our faculty, all of which are critical to your children's learning experience and to ensuring a bright future for the school.

Each year, we ask that you support:

### *(1) The 92NY Nursery School Annual Fund*

Contributions to this Fund are 100% tax deductible. A strong annual fund helps to support all aspects of the school's current year financial needs, as noted above.

### *(2) The 92NY Nursery School Annual Benefit*

This community celebration and great night of fun is also a major fundraiser (the only one each year) for the school. Opportunities for giving include gift and item donations, corporate sponsorships, participation in pre-Benefit events and a live and silent auction on the evening of the Benefit. This is an all-family, intergenerational event! We encourage grandparents and special friends to attend and to purchase an ad in our Benefit Evening Program in support of our school.

You may also choose, in addition, to support our 92NY Nursery School Endowment. Launched in 2019, the Nursery School Endowment was created to ensure a strong future for generations to come.

For all questions and information, please contact the Senior Director of Development and Community Engagement for the Nursery School.

**92NY NURSERY  
SCHOOL**

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92NY.org/Nursery

An agency of UJA-Federation