



SHOLEM ALEICHEM COLLEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sholem Aleichem College Primary School Curriculum

The Sholem Aleichem College curriculum aims to build strong foundations in all academic areas and focuses on ensuring students gain confidence and achieve success. Our teachers have a strong commitment to encouraging all students to strive for excellence in a supportive environment that recognises individuality and the differing rates of learning. There is a clear focus on literacy and numeracy, and programs such as Gap, Bridges and Bright Sparks, to complement our support programs. The curriculum is based on VELS and will be working towards implementing the new Australian Curriculum (AusVELS) which sets out the major areas of learning to be covered and educational outcomes to be achieved. The curriculum is designed to look at the students' progression of skills, content area and knowledge from Foundation to Year 6. Subjects are linked to other key learning areas of physical, personal and social skill development and the ability to apply knowledge in the real world.

Our curriculum is further designed to equip students for the challenging world of the 21st Century and to ensure that students develop the ability to take increasing responsibility for their own physical wellbeing, their own learning, relationships with others and their role in the local, national and global community.

Director of Curriculum

An important role within the school is that of the Director of Curriculum. The Director is responsible for the development of the classroom curriculum, as well as assisting with mentoring new teachers and the professional development of all teachers. The Director of Curriculum also oversees assessment and reporting.

Literacy

Our teachers are committed to ensuring that all students continue to develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Teachers regularly attend professional development courses to ensure that the best practice in teaching and learning is achieved. Our literacy curriculum is well resourced with a specific Centre designated to our structured literacy program.

Take Home Reading Program

Home reading is an extension of our Literacy Program (English, Yiddish and Hebrew). Children should be reading at home on a daily basis and are expected to borrow books from our reading programs. Monitoring and borrowing is overseen by the teachers and a sign in and sign out system occurs. Students who lose books from the take Home Reading Program will be charged \$15 to replace each book.

Mathematics

Our teachers are committed to ensuring that students continue to develop their skills in *Number and Algebra*, *Measurement and Geometry*, and *Statistics and Probability*. Teachers regularly attend professional development courses to ensure that best practice for teaching and learning is achieved

Global Education

Sholem Aleichem College is committed to providing a curriculum that is responsive to the future needs of our students. We will therefore continue to integrate global perspectives into our curriculum – learning about the world’s cultures and nationalities is important. Sholem Aleichem College promotes a global classroom and has links to schools throughout the world.

Handwriting

Whilst we live in a technological world, we believe our students must continue to develop the skill of handwriting, and appreciate the importance of presenting work that is both neat and legible. Skills such as physical posture, pencil grip, paper placement and fluency are taught and reinforced progressively over the years of schooling.

Units of Inquiry

Inquiry learning is central to effective teaching and learning. Inquiry is activated in the classroom through units of work that involve students in investigating shared topics / questions with a focus on two science and two history based topics per year.

Inquiry Learning:

- Creates a significant, relevant and challenging learning experience.
- Involves students in a range of learning activities.
- Requires students to engage in positive action.
- Integrates diverse subject areas whenever meaningful and appropriate.

Inquiry moves the students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding through:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities

- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concept
- making and testing theories
- researching and seeking information
- taking and defending a position
- solving problems in a variety of ways

Jewish Studies

The study of Jewish languages, Yiddish culture, Jewish history and traditions, Jewish ethics and customs (under the all-encompassing concept of “Yiddishkeit”) is the heart and soul of Sholem Aleichem College. Therein lies our uniqueness and that which distinguishes us from any other Jewish Day School in Australia.

Sholem Aleichem College puts great emphasis on its multifaceted Jewish Studies program. The program fosters awareness of all aspects of Jewish life with a particular emphasis on Jewish culture, Yiddish language and literature, Hebrew language as well as Jewish history, traditions and customs, ethics and values. Our purpose is to cultivate in our students a passionate sense of Jewish identity and a sense of belonging to the worldwide Jewish people with special ties to the Australian Jewish community and the State of Israel.

The LOTE Program at Sholem Aleichem College aims to give our students the ability to communicate in Yiddish and Hebrew and to appreciate the richness and diversity of Yiddish culture. As a result, our students are able to understand their cultural and historical heritage. Our students leave the school with a strong sense of their Jewish identity, as well as an understanding of Australia’s multi-cultural and ethnically diverse society.

Sholem Aleichem College seeks to instruct its students in all facets of Jewish life. We celebrate all the Jewish festivals, underlining the intrinsic ethical and moral lessons of these festivals. Our children are taught Biblical stories and Jewish History and are given a sense of the continuity of that history and of how the Jews have survived as a people for thousands of years.

We teach our children to appreciate the beauty of the Jewish experience and its traditions so that they feel comfortable with their Jewishness and proud of their heritage.

The Jewish Studies Curriculum reflects the secular approach of Sholem Aleichem College towards Jewish life.

As Jewish languages are an essential part of Jewish identity, our aim is to make our children truly multilingual. Yiddish and Hebrew are both taught as living languages.

Yiddish is taught as a vibrant language, so that by the time the children leave the school, they can read and converse in Yiddish. The study of Hebrew (using state of the art resources such as the Tal Am Program) as well as the role of the State of Israel in Jewish life ensures that our students are well prepared to continue this learning at any Jewish secondary school. Appreciating these vital components of their Jewish heritage and identity is also important.

As we run an integrated program all the Jewish festivals and national events are studied and commemorated in both the General and Jewish Studies programs. Rosh Hashone, Yom Kippur, Sukkes, Simkhes Torah, Khanuke, TuB'Shvat, Purim, Pesakh, Yom Haatsmaut and Shavues are studied and experienced at all levels – from Preschool to Year 6. Sholem Aleichem's birthday, Yom Yerushalayim, Lag B'Omer and TishahB'av are also part of the Jewish Studies curriculum as is Yom Hashoah, which is dealt with at an age appropriate level.

Jewish history, traditions and ethics are taught from a secular perspective from Preschool to Year 6. Jewish history and Bible stories (Tanakh) are taught informally from Preschool and formally from Year 1 onwards. The curriculum begins with Adam and Eve and Abraham and Sarah and follows the ebbs and flows of Jewish History leading to 1,000 years of Jewish life in Eastern Europe, the establishment of the modern State of Israel to our own vibrant Australian Jewish community.

Sholem Aleichem College offers its own Bnei Mitzvah program. It is an out of school hours program for students in Years 6 and 7, culminating in a Bnei Mitzvah Ceremony. The aim of the Sholem Aleichem College Bnei Mitzvah program is to increase the student's ability to make Jewish choices for themselves and to take up responsible citizenship in the Jewish community as they leave Sholem Aleichem College and enter adolescence.

The Bnei Mitzvah can serve to complement a traditional synagogue oriented ceremony or stand on its own as an entry to adult Jewish "citizenship" if the individual family so chooses.

Yiddish Language Studies

Aims

Sholem Aleichem College aims to develop in our students a fluency in and love of Yiddish language and culture. Through language immersion our students will gain a deeper understanding of their rich cultural heritage. This program will provide them with another tool to further their Jewish expression and identity. It is envisaged that through the program the children will be personally enriched. They will be able to perform in Yiddish and will be able to go out into the community confident in their understanding of Yiddish and their own language skills.

Structure

Yiddish is taught daily at Sholem Aleichem College at all levels including the Preschool. Preps study Yiddish / Jewish Studies five lessons per week, Years 1 and 2 study Yiddish / Jewish Studies six lessons per week, and Years 3 to 6 study Yiddish / Jewish Studies seven lessons per week.

Method and Materials

In the lower years a thematic approach is used to teach Yiddish - integrating themes from the General Studies curriculum. Our children use internationally prescribed textbooks as well as readers, computers, supplementary worksheets and activities. Yiddish learning programs and word processing programs are used in the Sholem Aleichem College computer lab.

As Yiddish is taught as a vibrant language at Sholem Aleichem College, oral work is an integral part of our language learning program. Creative writing in Yiddish is experienced by children in the upper years. The children work both individually and in groups and experience both formal and informal creative learning experiences. The children also interact with native Yiddish speakers, both within the school itself and in the larger Melbourne Jewish community.

Streaming of classes is implemented where possible so that children can learn in ability groups most suited to their level.

Hebrew Language Studies

Aims

The program aims to instil in the students a love of the Hebrew language and to bring enjoyment to their Hebrew learning experience. Students should become curious about the use of Hebrew in modern Israeli society and through the language, develop an interest in and so become familiar with, cultural and Jewish life in Israel.

It is envisaged that the children will feel competent in their understanding of language taught in class and that they will experience personal development through the program. We hope to develop each student's confidence in her/his own abilities. The program prepares students who graduate from Sholem Aleichem College to integrate into Hebrew learning programs in all Jewish Secondary Schools.

Structure

All students from Preschool to Year 6 receive Hebrew tuition. Preschool has daily sessions that immerse children in Hebrew song, dance and basic language.

Students in Prep have three sessions per week, in Years 1, 2 and 3 three sessions per week, in Years 4,5 and 6 it's four lessons a week. They work through prescribed texts and workbooks - the Tal Am system, as well as supplementary worksheets and activities. The program involves both group and individual work, including both formal and informal creative learning experiences. A thematic approach to the language acquisition program is used. This runs concurrently with textbook study.

Methods and Materials

Tal Am is a state of the art program and resource that is implemented in our Hebrew curriculum. The program provides a balance of formal and creative areas and includes reading, translation, grammar, stories, songs, dances, drama, poems, games, flash cards, art, computer group and individual work. We encourage children's involvement in the learning process and welcome any books and resources relevant to our learning program.

The Learning Centre

Learning Support Programs

A range of support programs are provided to address the individual learning needs of students

- The Bridges Program supports students who are experiencing learning difficulties,
- The Gap Program supports students in Year 1 to acquire the skills of reading,
- The Integration Program provides support for students with impairments or disabilities,
- The ESL Program assists students with learning English as a second language, and
- The Enrichment Program provides enhancement activities for students identified as being talented or gifted.

Bridges Program

The Bridges Program is a support program for all Primary School students who may be experiencing a learning difficulty in either literacy (English, Yiddish and Hebrew) or numeracy. Students may be withdrawn in groups or supported in the regular classroom.

Gap Program

The Gap Program is a special intervention program for targeted students in Year 1. The aim is to provide intensive support for those students who need extra assistance to develop the skills of reading and to attain benchmark reading levels.

Integration Program

At various times, a number of students may require significant assistance to support them in their learning. Whenever this situation occurs we apply to the Government and to Jewish Care for extra funds to support these students and to ensure that they continue to be integrated into mainstream schooling. An Integration Assistant may be employed to work with these students and to support the work of the class teacher. This program is under the auspices of the Director of the Learning Centre who coordinates programs, funding and regular meetings with teachers, parents and other professionals.

Educational Support Groups

In order to support particular students in their learning, various parents will be invited to be part of an Educational Support Group (ESG). The members of this group include the Principal, the class teacher, the Learning Support Coordinator, the parents, the student where appropriate, and any other person that the Group believes could help the student. The Group meets as necessary.

ESL Program

A number of students require assistance in learning English as a second language. Specialist teachers work to develop the ESL program to meet the learning needs of these students. Applications are submitted annually for extra funding from the Government to support these students.

Enrichment Program

The staff are sensitive to the needs of all students. We are aware that there are a number of students who demonstrate high levels of achievement. In order to meet their learning needs, this program offers a variety of Enrichment Strategies and Programs for English, Yiddish and Hebrew, individual learning plans, and differentiated activities within the regular classroom.

Performing Arts

Music

Our commitment to music and the performing arts as cultural expressions have always set Sholem Aleichem College apart. All students from Preschool to Year 6 participate in a music lesson each week in the Chaim and Malcha Brown Performing Arts Centre. In the earlier years, the emphasis is on singing to develop aural skills, rhythm and pre-instrumental skills. Our amazing instrumental program begins in Year 2 when all children have the opportunity to learn the recorder. Students in Years 3 to 6 have the wonderful opportunity to be involved in our instrumental program that culminates in an instrumental group. There are two separate choirs consisting of children from Years 3 and 4 and children from Years 5 and 6. Throughout the year, there are opportunities for students to perform both at school and on behalf of the school off campus. At Sholem Aleichem College we are passionate about the Performing Arts as a means of maintaining our cultural heritage and tradition.

Instrumental Program

Students in Years 3-6 participate in an instrumental program where each child is given the opportunity to learn one of five instruments. It also provides the children with the wonderful experience of being part of an ensemble group where they can practice their musical abilities as well as their social skills.

Soiree

Every student who has private music tuition is given the opportunity to perform at the annual soiree where individual children can showcase their talent.

School Concert

One of our very proud traditions is to create and perform a school concert each year. It involves all students from Prep to Year 6. It is a superb celebration of music, art, culture and language and is part of the integrated unit "Stagecraft".

Visual Arts

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards clearly set out the guidelines for program development along with the stages of learning. Visual Art is part of the discipline-based learning strand.

The Visual Art Program at Sholem Aleichem College provides activities that vary between teacher directed activities, guided activities and direct learning experiences. The two main focus areas in program planning are in relation to Creating and Making and Exploring and Presenting.

Sholem Aleichem College recognises that learning occurs:

In art by:

- exploring different media, techniques and processes
- finding out/recognising approaches in creating art work
- experimenting with ideas
- developing skills

Through art by:

- discovering connections between past and present
- making judgments/decisions related to choice of materials used, subject content, method of presentation
- investigating relationships with time and culture

Using art by:

- comparing techniques and styles
- reflecting on personal experiences
- expressing feelings and emotions

Physical Education

All students in the Primary School are scheduled for two periods of sport per week. Sport is an important part of our curriculum as it encourages co-ordination, health, physical activity and sportsmanship. Students in Years 5 and 6 are involved in interschool sport at various times during the year. This includes participation in the Jewish Schools' Sporting Association, as well as competitions with other schools.

Swimming

The annual swimming program is a compulsory part of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, and therefore all students are expected to participate. On the first day of the program all students are assessed by the swim school instructors and placed into the appropriate ability group.

Interhouse Athletics Carnival

In December our students will participate in the Annual Athletics Carnival - a fun day to build up some team spirit and consolidate skill based learning.

VJSSA

The Victorian Jewish School Sports Association organises various sporting competitions throughout the year for students in Years 5 and 6 (Senior Years). These competitions include: Swimming, Table Tennis, Skiing, Athletics and a Lightning Premiership.

Residential Program

Students in Years 3 to 6 attend various school camps. The students take part in many team-building tasks and learn the value of sharing, communal living and independence. These activities are a compulsory part of the curriculum and all students are expected to participate.

Computer Technology

Computer technology is an important part of the learning process. The school has a range of computer technology tools available, in various locations, to support teachers and students in the learning process: internet, email, intranet, interactive whiteboards, printers and scanners. A range of software is also available to support students' learning, and we are constantly upgrading and acquiring new information and communication technologies. Computers are situated in every classroom as well as a pod in the library for research purposes. Each student must sign and abide by the SAC computer use policy