



SHOLEM ALEICHEM COLLEGE PRESCHOOL

SHOLEM ALEICHEM COLLEGE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Sholem Aleichem College Preschool takes great pride and *naches* in being able to offer a stimulating and enriching learning environment centred on Jewish language and culture. Preschool staff aim to provide an integrated curriculum where Jewish and General Studies complement and enhance each other within a safe and secure learning environment.

The most important educational activity within our Preschool is play. We believe that kindergarten children learn primarily through play, and it is through play that our children will be immersed in a range of learning opportunities – literacy, numeracy, cultural, social, emotional, physical and general knowledge. In essence, our teachers are co-constructors of the children's learning environment. To this end, our staff deliberately create and design play activities that are inspired by, and in direct response to, the learning needs of our children.

The needs of the children in our Preschool are identified by the systematic observation of the progress of each child. In observing this progress, various aspects of development are noted: interests, physical development, language, interaction with peers, and fine motor coordination.

It is our aim for the children in the Preschool to develop independent learning skills, to be able to work and play cooperatively with others, to be able to control emotions, and to develop a positive attitude to learning. Nothing without joy!

General Studies Program

Our aim is to provide a positive learning environment that will promote the developmental levels of each child. Developmental programs are planned with an emphasis on 'Learning Through Play' and 'Individual Children's Needs.' The development of the 'Whole Child' is at the core of our planning.

Children's play, when guided and planned for appropriately, enables the process of learning and development to occur in a relaxed and positive way. Through play children explore, discover and experience. Play is the work of childhood and it is through this medium that young children attempt to make sense of the world around them.

- The program integrates Jewish Studies at all times
- Individual room programs are planned on a weekly basis
- The programs are displayed in individual rooms for parents to read
- Staff are responsible for monitoring the individual development of each child. Parents' feedback and involvement is valued and is an essential component of communication between staff and families.
- Staff will initiate and facilitate regular and ongoing communication with parents concerning their child
- The program will often be supplemented by the incidental, unplanned events that arise daily
- Experiences offered are open ended with an emphasis on the process not the end product
- The children are able to create, invent and extend upon their innate curiosity

- The program encourages the children to be sensitive, caring and respectful of the health and safety of others
- The children have an opportunity to solve problems, make safe choices and develop their independence skills
- The children are stimulated and challenged in all areas of development
- An opportunity will be provided for children who wish to play in a quiet area of the room

Jewish Studies Program

Sholem Aleichem College Preschool is a Jewish Preschool that promotes Jewish languages and culture. We aim to create in each child a sense of belonging to the Jewish People, and to expose them to the special role that Israel has in Jewish life, within the framework of living in multicultural Australia.

We provide our children with an immensely rich Jewish education, which is integrated into daily routine. Jewish festivals are taught and celebrated, and Shabbes is observed every week. Stories from Jewish history and the Bible are also taught. The children learn Hebrew, mainly through song and dance, while Yiddish is taught daily in both formal and informal sessions. Yiddish vocabulary is further extended with the learning of songs, poems and dances and the playing of games. Throughout the program, Jewish symbols, values and ethics are emphasised wherever possible in ways that are enjoyable and meaningful.

As a part of Sholem Aleichem College, our Preschool is a secular institution, and we believe that religion is a personal matter. We feel that the teaching of blessings or other religious ritual is the prerogative of the parents and the home. Our broad approach exposes the children to a variety of ways for expressing their Judaism; cultural, religious and traditional. We aim to foster an understanding and acceptance of differences within the Jewish and broader community. In this way we hope to develop within the child an appreciation and awareness of the richness of their heritage.

Parents will be invited to participate in the celebration of some of the festivals and will regularly receive a sheet of "Shabbes Questions" that reflect some of what the children have learned in Jewish Studies during the week. There will also be a number of Jewish Studies incursions during the year.

Orientation and Transition

Whether your child has been separated from you prior to starting at Sholem Aleichem Preschool or not, we do advise that the orientation process is discussed prior to starting, and where necessary, reviewed as your child settles. Before the school year starts, we invite parents and children to visit the Preschool so the environment becomes familiar. If at all possible we suggest shorter days at the start of the year. Bubbas and Zaides are welcome to be part of this orientation process.

Incursions/Excursions

The Preschool organises many incursions and some excursions for the children. We try to organise visitors or activities that are interesting and enjoyable and are related to the program, e.g. mobile farm, puppet shows, clowns, Aboriginal dancers, performers and drama groups. Parents are encouraged, and are welcome, to accompany staff and children on excursions.