

Policy Document No: ELC02
Category: Early Learning
Topic: Children's Program



Date of Issue: February 2006

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Considerations:

Children are encouraged to develop to their full potential; The Centre will provide safe, caring and supportive environment; individuals will be treated as equals.

Children's needs: For individual needs to be met; social, physical, emotional and intellectual development; warm open environment; equal opportunity; stimulating play environment.

Parent's needs: Information about their child's activities, involvement and development; complementing their role as parent.

Staff needs: Job satisfaction; recognition of professionalism; training and development opportunities; adequate resources.

Management needs: Professional staff who are able to provide appropriate programs.

Legislation and Sources

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations Part 4, Reg. 73, 74* 2011 Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
- *Belonging, Being and Becoming, the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, 2009, Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Barton, ACT.
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for Children from Birth to Eight Years*, 2009, DEECD and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Melbourne, Vic.
- Education and Care Services National Law: *Section 168*.
- Child Care Service Handbook (Cth);

Policy Statement

Our Early Learning Centres cater to each child's physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development, in an environment where they are recognised and nurtured as individuals. This will be achieved by observing, planning, evaluating and identifying needs and goals for each child on a regular basis. Planning will be based on the developmental needs of individual, small groups and the class.

Our Early Learning Centres will provide age-appropriate experiences for all children. This developmentally appropriate practice will still have the scope to challenge and extend each child's social, physical, linguistic, emotional and intellectual potential.

All staff in the ELC are actively involved in the planning process. Plans are evaluated on daily basis.

Our curriculum decision making is guided by the principles and practices outlined in *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*, and is aimed at promoting each child's learning in the following five outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators.

Our Early Learning Centres follow the Primary Years Program (PYP) as developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization. The PYP encourages an active learning approach where the children construct meaning through inquiry based learning.

Learning is achieved by providing opportunities to:

- ❖ Inquire
- ❖ Play
- ❖ Create and invent
- ❖ Theorise and Problem Solve

- ❖ Try new ways
- ❖ Build friendships
- ❖ Listen to others, and being listened to by others
- ❖ Build on others ideas
- ❖ Reflect and Consider
- ❖ Experiment, explore and discover
- ❖ Acquire new skills
- ❖ Express themselves freely

The PYP is designed to promote the development of the total individual by focussing on the development of 'trandisciplinary' skills. These skill areas include social skills, research skills, thinking skills, communication skills and self-management skills.

Our Early Learning Centres teach and promote a love of Judaism and Jewish values. The culture, laws, customs and tradition of Judaism are taught through song, story, art, craft and drama. We present an integrated program. Themes focus around the Jewish calendar and the Jewish holidays. Hebrew language is incorporated at every opportunity through simple instructions. Vocabulary grows through identification of common objects in the room, parts of the body, members of the family etc.

How the Policy will be implemented – Specific practises and procedures:

Indoor/Outdoor Program (includes general and Jewish studies)

Indoor and outdoor play holds the same level of importance within our Early Learning Centres. Our centres' programs are based on the knowledge that young children learn through uninterrupted blocks of time to actively explore their environment. We strongly believe in a developmentally appropriate, play based program, where play is considered an integral cornerstone of our practices. Staff create learning environments appropriate to the developmental needs of the various age groups and provide for the needs of individual children as appropriate.

- The staff members will be responsible for the development of a program of activities that is developmentally appropriate to the needs of children attending the service and reflects the philosophy and goals of the service.
- Both the indoor and outdoor environments will be set for the children before they access it.
- Staff will use a rotational method to ensure all children are planned for regularly. This rotational method will include observation, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- The program will be balanced to provide for quiet/active times, individual/small group/large group times, time for individual staff/child interaction, children's individual and group interests, children with special needs, and be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected.
- Information collected on individual children's will include observations of stages of development, children's interests, learning and play experiences, relationships with children and staff, strengths and abilities, and recommendations for program planning.
- Programs are displayed in each kindergarten room. We welcome any feedback and questions parents may have regarding the program and encourage them to contribute and participate. Staff will provide an opportunity to formally discuss every child's development within each year, but also encourage parents to ask staff in charge of each area to arrange a time if they wish to informally discuss child's development.
- Staff will initiate and facilitate regular on-going communication with parents concerning their child. Families are informed promptly and sensitively of any issues or concerns in regard to their child. Recorded information will be available for discussion.
- Our programs include hands-on activities and projects integrating traditional disciplines such as math, science, social studies, music, art, and language arts. Emphasis is placed on the process and the actual experience of an activity, rather than the final product.

Mat time

Mat times are considered an important time for staff and children to come together to discuss new found knowledge, share new ideas and evaluate practices. Essential Agreements should be established in each class to determine the expectations of the children, however, it is important for staff to remember

- To keep time and content age-appropriate.
- Offer alternatives for children not ready to participate.
- Read the cues of the group, and know when to finish.

Routine times

There are many routine times that are factors to be considered during the kinder day.

- Flexibility is built into routines, and any special needs are accommodated. The Centre will provide a formal Kindergarten Program under the instruction of full time qualified Kindergarten teachers.
- Staff will monitor noise levels in the environment and adjust activities with children to ensure noise levels are appropriate and do not interfere with purposeful play or activity.

- Routines will be built around the regular events of the day ie. arrival, snacks/drinks, toileting, main meals, washing, dressing, sleeping and departure, and will take into account the developmental needs of individual children, climate and physical environment, the numbers and ages of children within a given group, children with special needs, new children entering the group and parents' expectations.
- Staff will ensure routines provide opportunities for positive one to one interactions with children, and a time when they can get to know more about the child's likes, dislikes, interests, joys, fears etc.

As a staffing group we recognise that the list above is not exhaustive. We also value the following important goals of our role within the program:

- Establish a warm and caring environment in which children are secure to investigate, try different things, socialise, rest and learn through a variety of mediums.
- To facilitate and scaffold learning in all developmental areas and nurture each child's potential.
- To work with both child and parents to form meaningful bonds and develop their individual needs within the program.
- Help the child develop intellectual curiosity, skills in observing, problem solving and learning through his or her own efforts;
- Help the child become an independent thinker who is able to make choices and decisions;
- Help the child move from the need for outer authority to control of his or her own behaviour;
- Help the child develop confidence in his or her ability to achieve goals through independent effort;
- Help the child develop an understanding of feelings and how feelings motivate behaviour; help the child gain control over how feelings are expressed and learn acceptable ways of dealing with, and expressing strong feelings;
- Help the child develop the social skills needed to be successful in interpersonal relations, to function successfully in the peer group and to learn from peers.
- Help the child learn to respect and value individual, cultural, ethnic and racial diversity;
- Provide information on, and experience with, the social and physical world in which the child needs to function adequately;
- Develop the child's aesthetic sensibilities and horizons through artistic, academic, and intellectual experiences;
- Facilitate the child's physical skills through provisions of gross and fine-motor activities;
- Provide a program that is fun for children.

These goals are accomplished by providing a balanced program that includes both teacher-directed and self-selected activities, quiet as well as active experiences, and the recognition that learning occurs in both formal and informal ways.

Operational Information

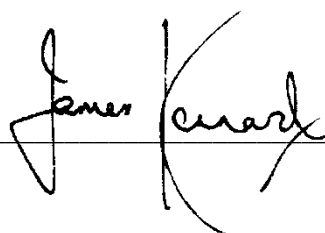
The Kindergarten program will begin each day at 8.30 am, and conclude at 3.00 pm. Before and aftercare hours care will be available from 7.30am to 5.45pm, for children in the Kinder program. Please note there are different summer and winter closing times for Friday aftercare which can be found on the aftercare display boards.

The Kindergarten program will be split into four terms, in line with the Jewish School Holidays.

During the term breaks we will operate a Holiday Program open the same hours as the long day-care program, children will need to be enrolled with the after school care co-ordinator to access this service.

The Kindergarten program is separated into two age groups - lower kinder and upper kinder. Generally, lower kinder is for children aged 3-4, while upper kinder is for children aged 4-5. The holiday program and aftercare programs are multi aged and cater for children aged 3-5.

Approved by the College Principal:



Reviewed: May 2014