

The King David School
**Junior School:
Prep - Years 5
Information Handbook**



THE KING DAVID SCHOOL



Welcome to the Junior School

The Junior School builds on the incredibly important foundations laid by the Kindergarten experience. In addition to the social-emotional learning that has already occurred, we then add a very strong academic program. The program is underpinned by the latest research on how children learn best. We do not believe in academic trends, but in approaches that have been proven to produce deep understanding and a set of tools to enhance future learning.

The program is based on thinking and creativity. The thinking elements are emphasised through the Philosophy program in which children are taught how to question and analyse. Beyond these skills the students learn how to effectively communicate, develop their curiosity and gain an understanding of the concept of a 'community of inquiry'. These skills are further developed through the Thinking Skills program and integrated into each subject area. The second theme of creativity is emphasised through English, Mathematics and the Visual and Performing Arts.

At the very heart of the Junior School is Judaism. It is our calendar, it is our moral guide, and it is our joy. Students leave the Junior School with a firm understanding of Jewish history and customs. More than this they have a profound love of Judaism and a strong Jewish Identity.

As students leave the Junior School they should be bold in their inquiries, respectful of all, supportive of their peers, creative in their thinking and have a firm foundation for future learning. This handbook illustrates the elements of the Junior School program specifically designed to achieve these aims.

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Curriculum Overview

The King David Junior School curriculum focuses on the growth and development of the whole child, not only as a learner within the classroom, but also as a member of the global community. The Victorian Curriculum provides the framework for learning that is engaging, relevant and challenging. It provides opportunities for students to build meaning and refine understanding, through both an explicit and inquiry approach to teaching and learning.

Core Subjects

English

Learning to read, write, speak clearly and listen attentively are critical early literacy skills. With a strong focus on the careful sequencing of learning activities, students progress along a learning continuum that builds both their skills and their self-confidence.

Students are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes and audiences with increasing emphasis placed on using correct structure, grammar and spelling. The 'Seven Steps to Writing' structure is used for narrative writing. A phonetic approach is taken to teaching spelling using the 'SMART' spelling program and this is augmented by the learning of high frequency sight words in the early years. Reading is explicitly taught using the CAFÉ strategies highlighting the importance of Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency and the Expansion of vocabulary. In the upper years, students progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'.

English as an Additional Language

The aim of the EAL program is to assist students from a Non-English speaking background to achieve their full potential through the development of English language skills. This is achieved through the following processes:

- Assisting students to integrate into Australian society and the local Jewish community
- Provision of individual and small group lessons
- Provision of advice to teachers on pedagogy, assessment and reporting
- Provision of teaching resources to teachers and advice to parents

Hebrew

The Hebrew curriculum is based on *Chalav u'Dvash* (Milk and Honey), *Ani Kore Ivrit* (I Write Hebrew) and *Chaverim Be'Ivrit* (Friends in Hebrew) programs and is organised through themes and topics which are arranged to provide progressive and cumulative learning. Topics are integrated with themes and key areas that are being addressed in other domains. Within each theme and topic, time is devoted to the acquisition of new vocabulary, language structures, and the conventions of written and spoken language. Students are immersed in hearing the language, the meaning of which is made clear by gestures, dramatization, singing, art activities and conversation. Stimulus materials such as stories, reading activities, card games, multimedia resources, visual and graphic displays and Internet sites, encourage students to experience the language being used normally for communication in these settings. Students participate in activities which locate the language in real communication contexts, hearing the language and using it themselves. The festivals and Shabbat are an integral part of the program.

Jewish Studies

The Jewish Studies curriculum is built around the fundamental principle that in order for Jewish learning to occur, it needs to be both theoretical and experiential. We focus on teaching students to make informed choices on how they would like to express their Judaism according to what works within their family.

All Jewish Studies curriculum emphasise four key aspects of Jewish learning: Jewish history, Jewish texts, Jewish living and Israel.

Throughout the year all the Chaggim are celebrated and the customs of each festival are studied and experienced.

The programs are in tune with the Jewish calendar and students understand the Jewish months and the themes that exist within each month.

T'fillah (Prayer)

The School believes that it is very important for all students to engage in meaningful prayer. We pray for four primary reasons; for students to be able to navigate their way through a traditional prayer service, to foster spirituality, to connect with Am Yisrael (the nation of Israel) and to strengthen Jewish literacy. Students come together each morning for Shacharit and once a week we have a larger Shacharit (morning) service with other year levels.

Library

In partnership with the wider school community, the Library is dedicated to creating a stimulating, literature-rich and well-resourced environment. Library staff work alongside teachers to enable access to resources in a range of formats to support the curriculum and nurture a love of reading. We endeavour to provide the support students need to become critical users and creators of information and ideas so that they may become independent lifelong learners.

The library is open throughout class time, most lunch times and until 4pm. Each class visits weekly to borrow and read.

Access to the library's catalogue and online resources is available 24/7 via the library link at the bottom of the KDS Home Page or go to <http://library.kds.vic.edu.au/>

Mathematics

All students benefit from being confident and creative users of mathematics, so that they can apply their knowledge in their personal lives and later in their work lives. Students are encouraged to see connections and apply mathematical concepts, skills and processes to pose and solve problems in Mathematics and in other disciplines and contexts. In all year levels students are encouraged to explain their thinking through pictorial representation and manipulatives, including 'Numicon'. We engage students to become self-motivated, confident learners through active participation in engaging mathematical tasks.

The proficiencies of Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning are fundamental to learning Mathematics and working mathematically, and are applied across the three strands of *Number and Algebra*, *Measurement and Geometry*, and *Statistics and Probability*.

Units of Inquiry (History, Geography, Science)

Units of Inquiry address skills, concepts and understandings from the learning areas of History, Geography and Science.

The purpose of each unit is to develop the students' understanding of their world. They draw on their growing experience of family, school and the wider community to develop their understanding of their relationship to others, past and present. Students investigate the similarities and differences between different groups of people and how the past influences the present day.

Geographical knowledge and skills are developed through the concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change. We aim to create in our students a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect for places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world.

Through Science inquiries, students seek to improve their understanding and explanations of the natural world. Following a sequenced program of units, they build on their knowledge to explore biological, chemical and physical sciences, as well as the Earth and space. Students are given the opportunity to develop their scientific skills and curiosity through firsthand experiences using the 'scientific method' to predict and explain outcomes of experiments.

In all inquiries, students are taught skills to help them identify their information needs, pose their own questions, select appropriate resources, locate, organise and present relevant information and assess the effectiveness of their research.

Regular excursions and visits from experts in the field are a feature of our Units of Inquiry, as we aim to make student learning both engaging and meaningful.

Special Programs

Enrichment

Differentiation of instruction to best support our students' learning is a hallmark of the teaching in all classes. There are occasions when students might be withdrawn from class to work in a small group at a higher, more abstract level of thinking.

The extension Mathematics program, from Years 3 – 5, enables talented students to enrich and increase their ability to think mathematically. This program covers the Mathematics curriculum at a broader level with a particular focus on algebraic thinking, problem solving and mathematical investigations. Students in the program also have the opportunity to compete in a variety of competitions at a National level.

The enrichment teacher works with each homeroom teacher to ensure that the students have differentiated work in each relevant lessons. The enrichment teacher is also in contact with parents about the program of each relevant student.

Information Communication & Technology

The King David School is committed to providing our students with the important life skills that will help them succeed now and in the future. We pride ourselves on providing students with a wide range of opportunities, including the opportunity to utilise technology to maximise their learning and development. We believe this is especially important at a time when the world is embracing technology at an ever-increasing rate.

The ICT curriculum enables students to become confident and creative developers of digital solutions through the application of information systems and specific ways of thinking about problem-solving. The curriculum ranges from cybersafety and awareness, information literacy, digital literacy, touch-typing, Google Suite of tools and more.

ICT is integrated throughout the curriculum in Prep-Year 2, however, in Year 3-5 the students also have a standalone ICT lesson. Students participate in a range of ICT activities which focus on visualising, thinking, creating and communicating. Students have access both to iPads and laptops.

Kibbutz

Kibbutz David HaMelech is a model kibbutz which is used as a vehicle for the following activities.

- Jewish Studies
- Hebrew
- Mathematics
- Science
- Health
- Civics and Citizenship

Under the guidance of a qualified horticulturalist and the classroom teacher, the students plant, tend, reap and eat a range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Each student appreciates the process of plant and vegetable growth, not merely the shop bought product. The Kibbutz is a weekly timetabled session for Prep – Year 2 students. For Years 3-5 students the Kibbutz is used through their Units of Inquiry where they are able to particularly look at the science related element. Through this program the students have the opportunity to learn responsibility, commitment, compromise and other teamwork skills. It also immerses the students in Jewish culture and history, Hebrew and Science.

Music

The Junior Music Program includes Classroom Music sessions for all students in Kindergarten through to Year 5. These sessions include singing and movement activities; performing on tuned and untuned percussion; and the development of music literacy and listening skills. Students engage in a variety of repertoire during these sessions and explore sound through composition and performance. In addition, all students in Years 2 to 5 learn an instrument. Years 2 and 3 participate in the String Program (violin, viola, cello) and Years 4 and 5 participate in the Wind Program (saxophone, clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, euphonium).

There are several performance opportunities for our students including musicals, concerts, soirees and creative assemblies.

Instrumental Music Lessons & Ensembles

Students are also given the opportunity to enrol in individual instrumental lessons. Lessons are offered on a wide range of instruments including piano, guitar, recorder, flute, saxophone, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, voice, violin, viola, cello and percussion. There is an extra cost associated with these private lessons.

Students can also participate in Music Ensembles such as choir, string ensemble and wind ensemble. Please refer to the Co-Curricular Handbook for further details.

Outdoor Education (Camps)

The King David School operates Outdoor Educational activities from Years 3-5. Outdoor education is designed to promote experiential learning in the outdoors that also encompasses skills and content from the formal studies of Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Jewish Studies.

Students participate in a range of activities located in the outdoor environment, including ropes courses and water-based activities. In Year 3 students are introduced to the outdoor education experience by spending one night away from home. Each year the time spent away from home increases by one night, as the students develop confidence and resilience to take on new challenges.

An important aspect of the School's outdoor education philosophy is to encompass our First Nations' views of the land and animals.

As well as promoting specific skills, the Outdoor Education activities are designed to challenge students on a personal and group level. Students learn how to negotiate with others to achieve the best result, what is a safe level of risk, how to work best as an individual and a team and develop skills they will be able to utilise throughout their lifetime.

Performing Arts

Speaking and listening skills are constantly nurtured through class discussions, oral presentations, regular participation in assemblies and in weekly Philosophy lessons. Literacy skills at all levels are enhanced by use of appropriate IT resources. Once a year students in Prep - Year 2 are involved in a musical production and students in Years 3-5 participate in a drama production. This provides an opportunity for all students to learn to think, move, speak and act with confidence. They learn how to be focused, innovative and resourceful, and collaborate with their peers towards a common goal.

Philosophy

The Philosophy for Children program provides all students with an opportunity to become effective, independent, critical and creative thinkers. Philosophical discussions are conducted in a 'Community of Inquiry', seated in a circle so that everyone can hear and see each other.

Students are encouraged to: develop their questioning skills, explore thematic concepts, to look for reasons, make assumptions, justify and clarify their opinions and make connections to their world and each other.

The program develops children's language skills through free flowing speech, use of analogies, reflective re-organising of thoughts and spontaneous creativity. It assists their ability to develop insights into areas that are not 'typically' covered at school, but are vital to their learning journey.

Although Philosophy lessons are timetabled once per fortnight, they are also interwoven into other areas of schooling.

The Philosophy for Children program enhances the development of a strong sense of worth and a sound self-esteem. It offers each child intellectual challenges and freedom to express their ideas and thoughts.

Physical Education

The Physical Education program provides students with a sequential skill development program; building from basic, fundamental motor skills to the more complex skills that are used in games and sports. Students combine motor skills and movement patterns during individual and group activities. They learn to achieve control when participating in locomotor activities requiring change of speed and direction. Through the regular engagement in sessions of moderate to vigorous physical activity, students learn to understand the link between physical activity and health. They learn to understand the contribution that rules and procedures make to safely conduct games and activities. All students are encouraged to understand and display the qualities of good sportsmanship.

Sport

Students in Prep to Year 5 experience a wide range of sports throughout the year during weekly timetabled Sport classes. Coaches from outside the School provide 3-4 week programs tailored to these age groups and include skills training in a number of sporting disciplines.

In Years 4 & 5, students can also compete in inter-school sport which includes swimming in Term 1, cross country in Term 2 and athletics in Term 3. Students chosen to compete in these competitions train leading up to the events during the school terms.

Year 5 students join with Year 6 students once a week to compete in the Balaclava District competition in a wide range of team sports, including basketball, cricket, volleyball, hockey, tee-ball, softball, handball, softcrosse, rounders, netball, AFL and soccer.

Student Leadership

Year 5 Student Leadership program

The students of Year 5 are the leaders of the Junior School. After completing initial training, every student is part of a committee to create change and betterment within our campus or connected to the wider community. The program provides an opportunity to develop confidence, organisational skills, group work skills and creativity. The students work with mentor teachers to identify areas for development and create a plan to bring about action or change. Each student works in two committees (*va'adot*) over the course of the year. The *Va'adot* include: Environment, Kindness, Charity, Sport, School Life and Communication.

Buddy program

Each Prep student is given a Year 4 buddy to assist them to feel part of the Junior School from the day they start. The Year 4 buddy acts as a mentor and a familiar face in the playground. Students enjoy a range of sessions throughout the year. This becomes a key relationship as the child moves through school.

T2L – Thinking to Learn

In the Junior School we value thinking. Since its inception, the school has been involved in Philosophy for Children (P4C) and it is through this lens that we have been able to identify the four areas of thinking that are integral to the growth of our students, as learners. We refer to these areas as the 4c's of thinking: Critical, Creative, Caring and Collaborative. Alongside the embedding of these thinking skills across the curriculum, explicit thinking skills are taught to students in Years 3 -5 in the T2L class.

In these lessons, students are taught about their brain and how it can change in response to the experiences it has and the role they can play in affecting this change in a positive way. The core thinking skills of the T2L programme: questioning, analysing, synthesising, evaluating, reasoning and reflection are taught through a variety of mediums, including materials from Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment program. It is our goal to make our students better learners and thinkers, who are well prepared to face the challenges of life both at school and the wider world.

Visual Art

The Visual Art Program provides an important creative outlet for the communication of ideas and feelings for the students. Students are encouraged to express themselves while exploring and experimenting with a variety of materials, tools and media. A range of sequential learning experiences provide the students with the opportunity to develop skills in 2D and 3D media. Creating and making art work involves imagination, experimentation, planning and the application of art elements, principles, skills, techniques and processes, reflection and refinement. Students are immersed in, and encouraged to use, the language of Art and to develop an appreciation of all artwork. They explore their own works and those of artists working in different historic and cultural contexts. They learn to express their personal opinions, analyse and describe features of their work and the work of others. Throughout the year many opportunities are provided for the students to display and present their works of art at the campus and in related exhibitions.

Wellbeing

The Wellbeing program operates on three levels: Explicit, Implicit and Experiential.

Explicit

Every class has wellbeing lessons each week. There is a program that is specifically designed to address the developmental needs of each year level. The Wellbeing lessons focus on the development of social skills, health education and moral development. Students are engaged with the RULER Approach to emotional intelligence which was developed by Yale University. Students also look at a range of other important topics including; bullying, cyberspace safety, friendship, mindfulness and resilience.

Implicit

In this area we look at the language we use around students. We use language that fosters optimism and resilience. For example we often use the word; 'yet.' This signifies that we cannot do everything already but through hard work we will get there. We also focus on the development of a Positive Mindset so that students will be able to drive themselves forward without extrinsic rewards.

Experiential

In this area we draw from activities in outdoor education, sport and the performing arts to help students with real life examples of facing adversity. We talk about how they feel before an event and what they have learnt about themselves following an event. This helps them develop some of the various qualities that one needs in life.

Wellbeing after lunch

In Junior School there is a 15 minute Wellbeing time following lunch. During Wellbeing time students focus on the development of mindful practice, social relations, gratitude and values education. The sessions are designed to develop each cohort and assist students to enhance their ability to reflect and manage their emotions.

Co-Curricular Information

There are many opportunities for students to be involved in activities outside their regular timetabled classes. This includes Instrumental Music, Before School Sport training, Robotics & Technology and a variety of lunch time clubs. A range of after school clinics are also offered. These are run by external providers on School grounds at an extra cost to families. For a comprehensive guide, please refer to the Co-Curricular information handbook. Further details about the schedule are available on myKDS at the start of each Term.

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