

The Calgary Jewish Academy



Kindergarten 2008-2009

Kindergarten 'A' Teacher Ms. K. Sher
Kindergarten 'A' Teaching Assistant: Mrs. S. O'Connor
Kindergarten 'B' Teacher: Ms. R. Prasow
Kindergarten 'B' Teaching Assistant: Ms. G. McCune

Special and Gifted Services
Technology Support
Teacher/Librarian
Remedial English/Hebrew
& English as a Second Language
Guidance Councillor

Ms. F. Bowden
Mr. Y. Suissa
Ms. S. Hachey

Ms. T. Freidman
Mrs. H. Latak

Welcome to E.C.S. Your child is entering an important and exciting year. We look forward to working with you as a team to provide the best possible Kindergarten. experience for your child. If you have any questions or concerns about the program or your child's progress, please do not hesitate to speak to us. Working together will help to nurture happy children who are eager to come to school and be an integral part of our program. We hope the following information will acquaint you with our Kindergarten goals and program.

PHILOSOPHY

Early childhood is a significant period in human development. Independence, initiative, decision-making, creativity, the ability to learn, the ability to relate to others and feelings of self-worth all have their beginnings in early childhood. What young children learn at this stage will have a major impact on successful learning experiences in school, on personal development and on future participation in society.

Early Childhood Services (ECS) refers to a continuum of programming that is developmentally appropriate and meets the diverse needs of young children and their families. In ECS programs, young children participate as active learners, build a shared set of experiences and develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepares them for subsequent learning.

Kindergarten refers specifically to the Education program for children in the year prior to Grade One and is part of the ECS continuum. The Kindergarten learner expectations describe learnings that are appropriate for young children and are part of a learning pathway. Some children are already developing, or have developed, some of the learnings described in the *Kindergarten Program Statement*. Most children will achieve these learnings before they enter Grade One. Others will continue to develop them during the primary school years. The Kindergarten program not only helps prepare children for entry into Grade One, but also provides a foundation for later success.

From Kindergarten Program Statement (revised September 2008)

The following five principles provide a framework for Kindergarten programming:

1. Young children learn best when programming meets their developmental needs.
2. Young children develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for later learning.
3. Young children build a common set of experiences through interaction with others.
4. Parents have the opportunity for meaningful involvement in the education of their young children.
5. Coordinated community services meet the needs of the young children and their families.

Daily Routine

A typical day may include:

1. Opening Circle

This is a very important part of the day as it not only includes teacher-directed learning but also encourages the children to practice the important skills of listening and speaking.

Some circle activities may include: greetings, sharing, calendar, weather, songs, new concepts, directives for the day, introducing new activities and equipment.

2. Activity Centres

Since children come to Kindergarten in various stages of readiness, one way of meeting their needs is through the use of centres. Centres allow the children to learn to think for themselves, trust their own judgment and be free to try things their way.

Centres change regularly. New items will be added or sometimes whole centres changed, depending on what theme we are concentrating on.

During this time, there are also guided activities, and the teacher works one-on-one or with a small group on specific skills.

3. Snack

4. Group time

This time may include drama, music, movement, stories, games, outdoor time.

5. Dismissal

The children will also participate in regularly scheduled library, computer and gym classes.

PROGRAM

The Kindergarten program is organized into the following learning areas::

- Early Literacy
- Early Numeracy
- Citizenship and Identity
- Environment and Community Awareness
- Personal and Social Responsibility
- Physical Skills and Well-Being
- Creative Expression

The learning areas are interrelated and meet the social, physical, intellectual, cultural, creative and emotional needs of young children. They describe the learning that young children accomplish not only in school but also in their homes and communities. They provide a transition to the subject area expectations of elementary school.

Young children learn in an integrated way and much of the learning identified will be accomplished simultaneously. Learner expectations will be integrated through learning activities that are developmentally appropriate for young children.

At the Calgary Jewish Academy, the E.C.S. curriculum is based on guidelines from Alberta Learning as well as the specific goals of our school. The following represents some of the concepts your child will be learning this year:

Early Literacy

Children's learning in the early grades is centered on language: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Most other curriculum areas, in fact, grow out of this focus on language. By the time they start school, virtually all children have learned to speak and listen, which are enormously complex skills. To ensure that rewarding language experiences continue to be shared by everyone, the E.C.S. day is filled with language.

Reading Skills

Children will: know that print is talk written down and that it can be read; become increasingly fond of books and literature and of going to the library; learn to 'read' pictures and signs; learn to read the names of colors, days, numbers and common objects in print; recognize the letters of the alphabet in both uppercase and lowercase; learn to differentiate between various sounds of letters; enlarge their vocabularies by hearing new words and engaging in new experiences; begin reading the stories they have dictated; begin reading stories with which they are familiar and begin building an awareness of how language works.

Writing Skills

Children will:

- . begin putting marks on paper (perhaps scribbles at first);
- . write through pictures, another early stage of story writing;
- . become aware that everyone has ideas that can be turned into stories in print, perhaps by dictation to a teacher or other individual;
- . learn to form letters and numerals;
- . begin to write words, using invented or transitional spelling;
- . try to express ideas through print - use writing at school and at home, in messages, invitations, lists, letters to friends, etc.

Listening Skills

Although children have been listeners for a long time before kindergarten, in school listening becomes a more conscious activity.

Children will:

- . take turns and let other speakers finish before they speak;
- . interact with a speaker by responding to what they hear;
- . listen purposefully to stories, records, tapes, sounds and rhymes;
- . practice conversation;
- . listen to directions, report them, and follow them;
- . listen to information and pass it along to others.

Speaking Skills

Children will:

- . take part in class discussions;
- . participate in speaking activities such as show-and-tell, chants, songs and plays;
- . learn numerous nursery rhymes and poems through repetition;
- . visit with friends at school and at home;
- . interact with adults in school and at home.

Early Numeracy

Concrete experiences are basic to the kindergarten math curriculum. At this stage of schooling, math is as much about vocabulary as about numerals, and is more concerned with consolidating understanding than with rote knowledge:

Math Skills

- Number Sense
- says number sequence 1 to 10, starting anywhere from 1 to 10 and from 10 to 1.
- names familiar arrangements of 1 to 5 objects.
- understands 1 to 10 correspondence
- represent and describes numbers 2 to 10 concretely and pictorially

Patterns

- demonstrates an understanding of repeating patterns, (two or three elements).
- sorts a set of objects based on a single attribute
- explains the sorting rule

Measurement

- compares two objects based on length, mass, and volume.

3-D Objects and 2D shapes sorts 3D objects builds and describes 3D objects

Citizenship and Identity

Community and Cultural Awareness/Personal and Social Responsibility

These areas focus on early learning in social studies and science. Kindergarten emphasizes a strong sense of identity and self-esteem and is a student's introduction to citizenship. As well, the child's artistic expression through thought and language, art, movement, music and drama is encouraged and accepted uncritically.

Concepts

- an awareness of one's uniqueness as well as similarities and differences between self and others;
- understand some of the qualities of positive relationships with friends and families;
- develop positive relationships with others;
- express feelings in socially acceptable ways;
- demonstrate and practice responsibility and independence;
- develop positive attitudes and behaviours towards learning;
- become familiar with such principles of citizenship as being responsible for their own actions, helping to make group decisions, sharing and respecting others.
- begin to contribute to group activities;
- willingness to learn about the environment and community;
- how to use materials in the environment and community;
- exploring familiar places and things in the environment and community.

The aim of the Health and Life skills Program is to enable students to better make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well being of themselves and others. Health is integrated into both the Alberta and Judaic curricula.

Topic Overview

Wellness Choices

Students will learn to make responsible and informed choices in order to maintain health and to promote safety for self and others.

Relationship Choices

Students will be helped to better develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions.

Life Learning Choices

Students will learn to use resources more effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges.

Physical Skills and Well-Being

Kindergarten children engage in physical activities that are related to both gross motor development (running, jumping, climbing) and fine motor development (puzzles, blocks, balancing games). They learn about some aspects of growth and development, and about the importance of caring for their bodies: teeth, eyes, physical exercise, rest and cleanliness. Children learn about the food groups and the importance of food choices and good eating habits. Safety training stresses the importance of being careful in the streets, on the playground, in the classroom and at home. It also covers fire prevention, the use of the 911 number and awareness of poisons.

Creative Expression

Children explore and express their thoughts and feelings through visual arts, music, drama, and movement. They become aware of their own imagination and creativity and that of others, as they interact with a variety of materials and respond to various forms of expression. They begin to develop an appreciation of the fine arts as they become aware of why and how ideas and feelings are communicated in many ways. As children share ideas and listen to diverse views and opinions, respect for and collaboration with others is fostered.

Judaic Studies

Our Judaic program is integrated daily in an informal manner through many activities. Each Jewish holiday is celebrated through songs, poems, stories, arts and crafts, and prayers. The emphasis is on establishing awareness and pride in our heritage and traditions, and developing their Jewish identity.

Oral Hebrew language is also presented in an integrated fashion, as well as through some formal instruction. The children will develop a basic Hebrew vocabulary consisting of introductions, family names, color words and basic commands. The Aleph-bet will be introduced later on in the year.

Shabbat is welcomed each Friday with a special 'Kabbalat Shabbat', including challah, 'wine', and candles. Children are encouraged to bring a coin to contribute to the JNF as a form of tzedakah (good deeds), and will be introduced to some simple prayers and Shabbat melodies.

Computer Studies

The overall aim of the Kindergarten Computer Literacy Program is to provide hands-on computer experience which is both educationally sound and enjoyable for the children. This class attempts to foster a foundation of skills, knowledge and a positive attitude towards computers and information technologies. Children will learn the basic parts of a computer and their functions. Basic keyboarding skills will be introduced and reinforced throughout the program. Students will learn to open, edit, save and print documents from a variety of programs. Students will also have the opportunity to enjoy the many educational programs and games in the CJA Computer Laboratory.

Library

Kindergarten students will experience books through various media. Children will be exposed to a variety of storytelling techniques. These experiences are intended to enhance the Language Arts component of E.C.S. Repeated refrain and cumulative stories will be used to prompt participation. Stories will be read, related or combined with other media. Themes will be correlated with those being used in the classroom whenever possible. Students will also learn the proper care of library books, and that all books have a special place in the library.

Field Trips

Field trips will be an integral part of the curriculum. As well, resource people will be invited to the classroom to enrich some of our units of study.

Evaluation

Evaluation in Kindergarten is done on a continuous basis, both formally and informally, through a variety of methods. Formal report cards are issued three times during the year, and Parent/Teacher interviews take place twice. Should you have any concerns at any time, please feel free to set up an appointment with the teacher.

Student Drop Off and Pick Up

The school day begins at 8:20 a.m. Children will be allowed into classrooms at 8:05 a.m. once the teacher and assistant have arrived. Preschool ends at 11:38 a.m. Please notify the teacher of any changes in pick-up arrangements. If you will be late for pick up, please notify the school and your child will be waiting for you at the office.