

# CARMEL SCHOOL EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION BOOKLET



Carmel School's motto is **Emunah V'da'at - Faith and Knowledge** which is the cornerstone of the philosophy of Carmel School. It is the aim of Carmel School's Early Childhood programme to nurture the development of the whole child as a self-motivated, life-long and active learner within the ethos of Orthodox Judaism.

Our learning goals are to assist your child to develop

- a strong sense of identity
- a strong sense of wellbeing
- confidence and involvement in their learning
- effective communication skills and
- a sense of connectedness to their world



## Early Learning Programme

Our Early Learning Programme recognises that learning is a continuous process and a collaborative effort between teachers, students and families. The curriculum nurtures the development of our children as self-motivated, life long and active learners with an understanding of themselves, their community and their world. Carmel students are active participants in the planning, execution and evaluation of their individual learning journey.

Our programmes are underpinned by the image of the child as strong, capable, competent and curious. They aim to foster inquiry and exploration with a focus on developing and reinforcing skills across all learning areas. This aims to ensure the students are literate, numerate and well equipped socially and emotionally to function effectively in 21st century society.

Our staff is committed to implementing the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia - Belonging, Being and Becoming. This Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. As the children progress throughout our centre they continue to experience the pedagogy of the Early Years Framework but the content they are exposed to as they progress through the year levels is that of the mandated Australian Curriculum.

### **The Importance of Play**

Children have a natural wonder and curiosity about their world and their place within it. Their way of exploring and learning about their world is through play.

- By providing periods of uninterrupted time to play children are provided with opportunities to discover, imagine, create, express and test themselves and their ideas, find inspiration and gain a sense of well-being.
- Play provides opportunities for children to make decisions, solve problems, explore, negotiate and learn to regulate their own behaviour.
- Outdoor play provides an opportunity for our children to connect with nature and facilitates both their intellectual and emotional learning.
- Play is the medium used by children to translate experience into something internally meaningful to them.
- Play clarifies concepts, provides emotional relief, and facilitates social development.



Play is facilitated, guided, monitored and extended by staff but owned by the children.

Our ELC staff is trained to guide and develop the children's play

- By carefully and creatively planning developmental learning activities that build on the children's interests and abilities.
- By thoughtfully planning stimulating and inviting indoor and outdoor learning environments to extend the children's experiences, skills and understandings.

### **Assessment and Reporting**

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence of what children know, do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating.

It enables staff

- To plan effectively for each child's learning.
- To communicate about each child's learning and progress.
- To identify if the child needs additional support or enrichment.
- To guide the planning of programmes to ensure each child is given the experiences required to make continuous progress.

Each child's progress is carefully and regularly monitored and assessed through observation, discussion and documentation.

Discussion between staff members and the child's parents is an important part of this assessment. Parents are encouraged to participate when possible:



- by attending parent/teacher evenings
- by spending time in the classroom as a parent helper,
- by talking with their child's teachers on an informal basis or
- by meeting at a formal interview requested by either the teacher or the parent.

### **In Kindergarten**

- Portfolios showing examples of the children's learning journeys are compiled. These Portfolios are works in progress and are available for parents to peruse at any time.
- Parents are always welcome to request a meeting or to informally speak to their child's teachers as the need arises.

### **Early Intervention**

The School has a policy of early intervention. The aim is to identify children who would benefit from targeted and specific interventions across a range of areas (cognitive, social/emotional and physical). This will be done in full consultation with parents, the child's teacher, the School Psychologist and the Head of Primary.

The school also provides for students with additional/special needs. Parents should discuss their child's requirements and Individualised Educational Plans with the Head of Primary. Therapy rooms are available for use by internal and external therapists.

## Hebrew Programme and Jewish Studies

### עברית ויהדות

*"Who is wise? One who learns from everyone."*

*Pirkei Avot 4:1*

Carmel School is dedicated to creating an environment in which children can grow to their full potential as good school citizens and responsible members of society.

Our aim is to nurture and develop strong and positive values in our students as well as a clear Jewish identity and knowledge and love of Hebrew, Chagim, Torah and Israel.

The curriculum is comprised of both formal and informal activities which enhance student learning. This learning is facilitated in a variety of ways including play, song, dance, drama, story-telling and art and craft activities.



In the Early Years, children have a very natural approach to language, with no need for rational explanations and no inhibitions to use it even with mistakes appropriate to their developmental stage. Developing oral skills is important to facilitate the acquisition of literacy skills later on. Creating this positive attitude is very significant because Ivrit for the Jewish student is not just a language tool, but a way into Jewish

culture. Ivrit allows the children to "feel at home" in their Jewish cultural world and become familiar with vocabulary and expressions in Hebrew. Chalav Udevash our Hebrew Programme integrates the Chagim into the units of study.

Children participate in Tefillah, say Brachot, learn about the weekly Parasha and enjoy a Kabbalat Shabbat on Friday mornings.

### Jewish Studies Enrichment Programme

Carmel School offers a Jewish Studies Enrichment Programme above and beyond the timetabled Jewish studies lessons if there is an adequate demand. These additional lessons take place twice a week and are scheduled during the school day. Enquiries or additional information about the enrichment programme should be directed to Mrs Debbi Benn, the Coordinator of Hebrew and Jewish Studies in the Primary School.

## Be A Mensch Policy

Carmel School has the Be A Mensch Behaviour Management Policy which is integrated into all aspects of school life from Kindergarten to year 12 and is explicitly taught using the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) programme.

The children are encouraged to explore the notion of what it means to be a mensch.

It encourages students to:

- Show care and compassion to all.
- Treat others with consideration and respect.
- Include others.
- Stand up for the rights of others.
- Be honest and sincere.
- Be tolerant.
- Care for their world.
- Do their best at all times.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour.



The focus is on building empathy as well as on the positive and caring behaviours children exhibit. It promotes zero tolerance for a culture of bullying.

Our philosophy on behaviour management within the Kindy classrooms is that children and staff have the right to an environment that promotes respect for self and respect for others. We use an opportunity to guide considerate behaviour as a learning experience and not a punitive one. We guide, support and encourage children to use their words to solve problems rather than physicality. We use this experience as a time for reflection, a time for contemplation and empathy and a time to think about how they could have managed the situation in a more considerate way. We have had great success using this approach and are happy to support parents in taking some (or all) of these strategies to use at home.



## Supporting the Jewish Ethos of Our School

The School's programme is based on Modern Jewish Orthodoxy. We do urge parents to respect this ethos by scheduling parties on days other than Shabbat or Jewish Festivals and by providing kosher food at parties.

It is the school's policy that all boys wear a kippah throughout the school day. We encourage men visiting the school to also wear kippot so they are viewed as positive role models for our students.

## Birthdays

We hold a special Kindy party for every child and invite you to attend with any other significant others in your lives. The child bakes a cake with one of our special co-educators and chooses the icing and design that they want.

We use this special party time as a deep learning experience and because this is repeated many times throughout the year the children become active participants very early on.

We ask you please to be discreet in the handing out of party invitations if every child is not invited as it can be hurtful for a child to not to receive an invitation, staff unfortunately cannot hand out invitations.



## Library

An appreciation and love of books will be developed during library lessons. The children will be able to borrow a book on a weekly basis. To keep our books protected and in good condition your child will need a school library bag.

## Quiet time/Re-charge time

The children will rest for approximately 40 minutes each day. They may sleep or simply rest quietly on the mat. Each child will be given a beautiful handmade quilt to re-charge with. Please will you supply a labelled pillow case and we will supply a foam insert. We encourage the children to listen to stories during this time as it is an important aspect of their literacy development. Children are not required to sleep but this quiet time is encouraged as part of children's wellbeing, to connect their mind with their body and to take time out of their busy day.

## Term Dates for 2015

- TERM 1 - Monday 2nd February - Thursday 2nd April
- TERM 2 - Monday 20th April - Friday 3rd July
- TERM 3 - Tuesday 21st July - Friday 25th September
- TERM 4 - Tuesday 13th October - Tuesday 8th December

- A calendar appears on the Carmel School website: [www.carmel.wa.edu.au](http://www.carmel.wa.edu.au)
- Events are also published in the Carmel school Newsletter - *The Keshet*.
- Notes or emails are sent home prior to major events and excursions. Please ensure you check your email daily as this is our preferred method of communication.
- Information is also posted outside the classrooms.

## First Week of School

In 2015 first term commences on Monday 2nd February.

- In Kindergarten, the children's intake will be staggered. Half will attend on Monday 2nd February and Wednesday 4th February the other half on Tuesday 3rd February and Thursday 5th February. All the students will attend from Friday 6th February. You will be notified which days your child will attend.

## Kindergarten Hours

- The Kindy doors are open from 8.15am. Parents are welcome to join their children in activities such as reading stories and playing games until 8.30am when the 'formal' program commences.
- For Kindergarten children attending the varied programme the school day concludes at 12.15pm on the half days and 3:00pm on the full days.
- The full time Kindergarten day concludes at 3.00pm allowing families time to clear the car park before the Year 1-6 school day concludes.

Please note that the car park becomes very busy in the mornings and in the afternoons.

**The drop off/pick up zone** is literally to drop off students and to pick them up.

**It is a no-standing zone and in the interests of safety, parents are not permitted to leave their cars and enter the school.**

As Kindergarten and Pre-primary parents are bringing children to the classroom and collecting them from the classroom they are asked to use the parking bays in the Primary car-park or in the Maccabi car park. Please be aware that, for various reasons, some of the spaces in the Primary car-park are reserved.

## Bringing and Collecting Children

- Please bring your children to the class teachers each morning.
- At the end of the school day they will be packed up and ready to be collected from the classroom.
- Please inform the school if something unforeseen has occurred and you are going to be late.
- If a friend or relative will be collecting your children please let staff know either by phone or in writing.
- If siblings are collecting brothers or sisters from Kindy they must be in Year 6 or older. Again please advise staff of this arrangement.



Children who are not collected due to a mix-up in a roster or due to a parent being unavoidably delayed, will be supervised in the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre or taken to the Primary School Reception.

## Outside School Hours Care & Vacation Care (OSHC)

Ruth Landau Harp Outside School Hours Care & Vacation Care (OSHC) runs an excellent school-based before, after and vacation care service catering to children from Kindy to Year 6. Our Co-ordinator is a fully qualified educator, bridging the gap between outside school hours care and the school environment. The OSH offers a fantastic platform for fun and learning in a conducive and relaxed environment.

We offer a nutritious breakfast and or afternoon snack as well as highly qualified educational specialists who offer homework assistance, arts and crafts, sports and speciality activities. Vacation Care offers full day programs packed with fun and exciting activities that cater to all age groups. Ruth Landau Harp is a recognised Outside School Hours and Vacation care facility and therefore government rebates and benefits apply, making this fabulous service more accessible and affordable.

Should you require further information please email: [oshc@ruthlandauharp.com](mailto:oshc@ruthlandauharp.com) or phone: 0447 111 446.

## Sickness and Absences from School

The Primary School's phone number is 9276 1900

- If your child is unwell or is not coming to school for any reason please phone the **Primary School Secretary on 9276 1900** by 9am or email her on [primary@carmel.wa.edu.au](mailto:primary@carmel.wa.edu.au) and she will pass the information on to staff.
- If your child has not arrived at school and the school has not been notified you will receive a call to verify that your child is at home and is safe.
- Please keep children with colds and coughs at home and notify the school. The school must also be notified if a child has an infectious disease (e.g. chicken pox, measles).
- You should advise the school in writing if you will be away on holiday during term time.
- It is a legal requirement that the school has an explanatory note for students who are absent for two days or more.

Unfortunately head lice can be a problem in all schools. In order to keep some control of this perennial problem we urge parents to keep long hair plaited or tied back and to regularly check their children for head lice. Health regulations and details on treatment of lice are available from the Kindergarten and Prep staff or from the Primary School Reception.

## Medicines

- If your child is well enough to attend school but requires regular medication, do complete the necessary form (obtained from the staff or reception) to give authority for staff to assist.
- Include specific instructions concerning time, dosage and method. This information must be given **for each new regime**.
- The staff will administer minor first aid as necessary.

## Allergic Reactions or other Health Conditions

It is important that staff is informed of any health conditions your child might have. Ensure they know exactly what treatment is to be administered on an ongoing basis as well as in an emergency.

Even though you will be required to fill in medical forms at the beginning of each year it is advisable that you personally inform staff of all health issues and conditions.

### **Recess and Lunch Requirements**

- The school day is a busy and active day for children. A healthy breakfast is an important and essential start to the school day.
- Parents are encouraged to pack a nutritious and healthy recess and lunch for their children so that energy levels are sustained throughout the day. As early childhood educators, we are concerned with the health and welfare of all young children and we will be encouraging the children to develop awareness about food that is healthy and makes their body work well.
- Morning tea needs to be packed separately from lunches and both containers need to be clearly marked with the child's name. Please do not include bread for recess as we don't do the prescribed washing prior to recess or Birkhat Hamazon following recess.
- When the children arrive at school there will be a recess basket and a lunch basket by the classroom doors. Children should put their boxes into the baskets before they come into the classroom to start the day.
- Students should bring a filled labelled water bottle each day.
- Lunchtime begins just after mid-day. It is school policy that meat products are not included in lunches.



### **Allergies and Anaphylaxis**

There are a number of students at Carmel School who are allergic to products such as nuts, eggs and fish and bananas. It is a school policy that students do not share their lunch with anyone and do not bring food to school for other students.

Peanut butter and other nut products are not used in the canteen or for cooking purposes and parents are encouraged not to send food with nuts especially if there is a student with a nut allergy in the class.

Please note all staff is trained in the management of anaphylaxis. Parents whose children have allergies must provide the school with full details, an anaphylaxis management plan for their child and an EpiPen.

### **The Canteen**

Mrs Glenda Stark manages the Carmel School canteen which is situated in the Primary School.

- Students from Kindy and Prep may order their lunches.
- Summer and winter menus are available from Reception.
- Order slips with the correct money should be put into the order bags outside the canteen door by 9am.
- Lunches will be delivered to the Kindy and Prep classrooms.

If you have time to volunteer to assist in the canteen for one morning a term please let Mrs Stark know. All offers of help are always greatly appreciated!

### **Our Kosher Kitchen**

We are very fortunate to have a strictly kosher kitchen in the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre which is used by Kindergarten to Year 6 students under the supervision of staff.

In order to maintain the kashrut of the kitchen, utensils from the drawers cannot be used for children's lunches. Items from home should not be placed on the countertops or in the fridge. Your support in keeping the kitchen Kosher is much appreciated.



### **Children's Clothing and Uniform**

School uniform items such as hats and bags, as well as the 'I'm a Carmel Kid' t-shirts are available at the uniform shop in the Primary School. Whilst it is recommended the Kindy and Pre-primary uniforms are optional.

Please phone the Uniform Shop on 9375 4349 for opening hours. Mrs Koff runs the Uniform shop and will be able to show you what is recommended.

- A kippah for boys is compulsory.
- When purchasing clothing and shoes for your child be aware that we encourage self-help garments, as these promote independence.
- Our students wear hats outdoors all year. Please apply sunscreen before sending your child to school. Extra cream will be applied during the day if necessary.
- Please ensure all clothing is named. Since there are often students with the same first name please include a surname too!
- The Carmel School bag and library bag can be purchased from the uniform shop. They are recommended because of their practical size and durability.

### **Keeping in Touch - The School Newsletter - Keshet Carmel**

The Keshet Carmel is the Carmel School's weekly newsletter. It is packed full of Carmel School information, happenings and events. It is emailed to parents each Thursday. All families are encouraged to peruse it. Each week there are articles pertaining to the activities in the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre.

*The school's **logon** and **password** may be obtained from reception. A few hard copies of the Keshet are kept in the office.*

### **Special Interests**

Parent and community involvement is encouraged and valued.

- If parents have or know someone who has hobbies, interests and talents that can be shared with the children please let staff know.
- Parents who are willing to talk about their occupations or who have had experiences or adventures that would be appropriate to share with the children should let staff know so that they can be called upon to enrich the children's learning experiences when suitable themes or topics are covered.

### **Family Help**

All families are invited, and encouraged, to help in classrooms in the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre.

- Helpers in Kindy and Pre-primary assist in their children's classrooms during the morning until mid-day. Each term a list is put up on the Parent Notice Board for parents to fill in.
- They are encouraged to interact with the children and to assist with classroom and recess routines.



Please note that Carmel School welcomes and values helpers to our Kindergarten/Pre-primary classrooms. We appreciate this help enormously and hope parents and grandparents have an enjoyable day. However, we know that you will understand that we ask you to please be aware that whatever you observe while you are here for the morning is **strictly confidential**.

You may feel that you are being helpful giving a friend a recount of their child's morning, but please understand that you will be witnessing only isolated situations and therefore should be careful about making generalisations that may give an inaccurate 'picture' of that child's behaviour, interactions or development. It is important and only fair that everyone's integrity is maintained all of the time.

### Toileting

There is an expectation that all children should be fully toilet trained before entering Kindergarten. Each child should be able to manage their toileting independently.

- Our staff do understand that accidents can occur so parents are requested to send in a change of clothes - appropriate to the season.
- These clothes should be in a named plastic bag and kept in the child's school bag.

### Excursions and Incursions

As part of the normal early childhood curriculum the Kindy and Pre-Primary students will be participating in various excursions and incursions.

Parents will be notified of all excursions in writing or via email. Early in the year the school will be sending out Excursion Permission forms to cover all outings during the year.



## **Addresses, Telephone Numbers and Emails**

Carmel School staff is keen to communicate with parents via email. It is a convenient way to remind parents of activities and meetings and a wonderful vehicle for sending home photos of in-class activities and events. It will not replace the all important face to face contact

Should you wish to email the school it can be done through [primary@carmel.wa.edu.au](mailto:primary@carmel.wa.edu.au) Mrs Osrin, the School Secretary will forward emails to the respective staff.

If you are collecting emails and other contact details from parents, for events such as birthday lists, please ensure that you have every parent's explicit permission. Some of our families do not wish to have their details or email addresses circulated.

## **The Kikar**

The central area in the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre is called the Kikar, 'the meeting place' in Hebrew. It is used for a variety of activities during the school day and as a storage and display area for artwork and constructions.

When gathering in this area after school hours we request that parents ensure that all children are adequately supervised in the Kikar so that students' work and displays are not damaged.

There are notice boards in the Kikar for general information regarding Carmel School activities as well as announcements pertinent to each class.

## **Parents and Friends Association**

Carmel School has a very active P&F who not only raise funds for equipment and materials but also welcome new families and organise parent education events. If you require any support or assistance or are able to help with any functions please ask staff about the P&F and they will introduce you to members of this dynamic committee.

## **Grandparents and Special Friends Club**

There is also a Grandparents and Special Friends Club that meets once a term. Their role is not a fundraising one. Their job is to be an appreciative audience for performances put on by our students and they are welcome to read stories and generally interact with their grandchildren and their friends or help in the library. Please ask at the front office for an enrolment form or contact Vicki King, President of the club on 92766765.



## **Security Patrol**

Carmel School takes every precaution to maintain the highest standard of safety and security for our students. Carmel School parents are requested to participate in the Security Patrol Roster before and after school. CSG will contact the parents at the start of every term via email to notify them of their duty days.

## **In Conclusion**

We welcome all students and parents to the Carmel School Community and the Ashley Schaffer Early Learning Centre. We look forward to working together to provide top quality educational and social experiences for our students in a happy and nurturing environment.

Should you have any queries, concerns, suggestions or compliments don't hesitate to contact the School.