



Katz Hillel Day School

EC-2 - Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

At Katz Hillel, the environment includes a warm, creative experience. In the classroom, teachers will help the children discover things happening around them (seasons, nature, animal life, friendship, families, themselves and their Jewish heritage) through art materials, books and activities. Children will be encouraged to see more, ask more questions and reflect upon solutions to those questions.

The following is a detailed overview of what children gain through play in the different centers that you will see in each classroom:

Dramatic Play Area:

When your child plays with the housekeeping area, he or she:

- Learns about the roles of mothers, fathers and about children and family living
- Understands what it feels like to play the role of someone other than himself or herself
- Learns how to use his or her imagination
- Learns to cooperate with other children and relate to others
- Increases his or her ability to communicate with others about personally meaningful experiences
- Imitates and describes sounds from the environment
- Pantomimes actions such as cooking and vacuuming

Not all children use the dramatic play area as a place for cooperative dramatic play. Some use it as a place to explore, figure things out and use the tools, utensils or clothing for other activities.

Cooking:

When children cook, they tap into skills of which they are unaware such as math, science and social studies. Furthermore, they:

- Learn how to follow directions
- Stimulate and use all five senses
- Recognize colors, shapes and different kinds of foods and kitchen utensils
- Have an opportunity to use different kinds of tools and equipment to improve small muscle coordination
- Develop vocabulary with words such as “half” and “whole”
- Observe and describe transformations
- Measure ingredients
- Compare numbers and amounts
- Predict events

- Recognize objects by taste, touch and smell
- Describe relations among events and ideas
- Distinguish between “some” and “all”
- Observe that clocks are used to denote the passage of time
- Taste new foods

Block Area:

Blocks are another means by which to learn math, science and social studies. Children also:

- Learn to use their imagination to create something
- Have the satisfaction of being able to make something
- Learn about sizes and shapes, weights and balances, height and depth, smoothness, roughness and volume
- Learn about constructing
- Learn about communities and planning for communities
- Learn about various forms of transportation
- Exercise their bodies
- Learn to play with others
- Learn to communicate ideas through language when discussing similarities and differences
- Create patterns when building
- Deal with similarities and differences
- Represent personal experiences through role play and pretending

Outdoors:

When children play in the outdoor area they:

- Learn how to use their bodies effectively
- Experience joy in achieving a skill
- Have fun and relax through bodily movement
- Learn the limitations of their bodies
- Learn safety and caution
- Learn to take turns and to share a piece of equipment
- Develop vocabulary words such as “over” and “under”
- Gain strength using large muscles
- Represent experiences through dramatic play
- Experience the direction of movement of things and people
- Observe and describe weather changes
- Explore the natural environment

Art or Creative Area:

When children work at the art area, they:

- Are more concerned with the process than with the product (This is as it should be for this stage of development.)
- Learn about colors
- Learn to use imagination and transfer ideas to paper
- Get emotional satisfaction from being able to express themselves
- Learn how to use small muscle coordination to handle a brush

- Learn to make choices and decisions
- Increase language ability by talking about their creation
- Learn how to use materials like scissors, paste, tape and staples
- Learn how to use their imaginations to make the kind of creation in mind (Once again, the process, not the finished product, is important to them.)
- Learn about shapes, sizes, colors and textures
- Mix, stir, roll, cut, punch, twist, bend and fold materials, and learn to generate and observe changes, fit things together, take things apart, arrange, combine and transform

Sand and Water Area:

When your children work in the sand and water area they:

- Find it soothing to bury their hands in sand or pour water in and out of cups
- Are able to relax with this media art center and focus on a task
- Learn about size and measurement by experimenting with measuring spoons, cups and different size containers
- Learn what floats in water
- Develop vocabulary words such as “empty” and “full”
- Explore actively the attributes and functions of materials with all of the senses
- Transform and combine materials

Quiet Area:

The term “quiet” is a relative one. A group of two, three and four year olds are unlikely to remain quiet for any length of time, nor should they be expected to, but their activities in the quiet area are quieter than block building, role playing, instrument playing and play dough pounding. This area is filled with books, puzzles and small manipulative games and materials.

When your children work in the quiet area, they:

- Have an opportunity to work alone or together with other children
- Gain satisfaction in completing a puzzle or game and build self-confidence
- Have an opportunity to improve eye-hand coordination
- Distinguish and describe shapes
- Fit things together and take them apart
- Develop an awareness of symmetry in their representations
- Compare and sort objects into groups
- Use and describe something in many different ways
- Compare numbers and amounts

When your children listen to stories or look at books, they:

- Learn to listen
- Increase their vocabulary by hearing new words
- Learn about different concepts, people and places
- Learn to enjoy books and reading
- Visualize the things they are hearing about
- Begin telling stories from pictures and books in an orderly sequence
- Begin hearing similarities and differences in words
- Recall information that is seen and heard

- See adults reading and enjoying stories
- Learn to recognize the names of common objects, places and actions
- Develop book awareness concepts such as following pictures and print from left to right and top to bottom, and when reading books in Hebrew they learn the difference in reading direction and letters
- Learn to handle books carefully

With all of these materials children are also shown how to clean up. Oftentimes cleaning up is not viewed as part the curriculum. This is simply not the case. When children clean up after they have used a material, they are learning Derech Eretz for the materials, their friends and teachers. Much time is spent on helping children learn this fundamental element of play.

As a developmentally appropriate program, we see children as individual learners. All children learn at their own individual rate and therefore, the goals described in this pamphlet should only be used as guidance in helping children reach their potential.

Developmental Goals for the EC-2 Program

Self-Awareness and Social Emotional Development

- Can display a high level of confidence and self-esteem by showing pride in accomplishments
- Children and parents develop strong connections and high levels of trust with teachers
- Show strong sense of self as an individual; for example, is able to reply to simple requests by saying “no” or “yes” or by using two or more word answers
- Becomes capable of self-evaluation and has beginning notions of self (happy, sad, angry, etc.)
- Uses name of self and others
- Experiences self as a powerful, potent, creative doer, explores the environment and is able to question, evaluate and hypothesize
- Begins to understand other children’s moods and emotions
- Shows empathic concern for others
- Begins to interact with others in play situations

Motor Development

- Scribbles with crayons, imitates horizontal hand stroke
- Walks up and down stairs without assistance, can jump off one step
- Stands on one foot
- Stands and walks on tiptoes

Language Development

- Combines words
- Listens to stories for a short while (5-15 minutes)
- Speaking vocabulary of approximately 200 words
- Begins fantasy play
- Uses adjectives and adverbs
- Recounts events of the day
- Begins to use compound sentences

Physical, Spatial, and Temporal Awareness

- Can negotiate small spaces
- Begins to understand up, down, side, under, over, around, bottom, below, above, in and out
- Can begin to place simple garments on own body
- Can label large and small, hard and soft, heavy and light, etc.

Cognitive

- Begins to understand concept of praying to Hashem
- Begins to understand concepts of holidays
- Begins to understand concept of Brachot
- Begins to understand concepts of Torah and Mitzvot
- Begins to understand concepts of paint and combining paint to create new colors
- Begins to recognize common colors
- Begins to understand start, middle and end of projects
- Can count by rote to five

Developmental Goals for the EC-3 Program

Self-Awareness and Social Emotional Development

- Can display a high level of confidence and self esteem
- Children and parents develop strong connections and high levels of trust with teachers
- Understands pronouns (I, me, he, she, they, them, and all)
- Able to negotiate immediate needs with others in the environment
- Exhibits the ability to control impulses
- Can negotiate within a group setting
- Gains greater enjoyment from peer play and joint exploration
- Begins to understand how to cooperate
- Joins other children in play
- Can regulate bodily functions

Motor Development

- Can jump off the ground with both feet
- Is able to use scissors with proper grip and can begin to cut paper on a line
- Draws purposeful circles
- Draws face of person
- Can begin to throw a ball by guiding the course of the ball with fingers
- Can hold paper with one hand while writing with the other hand
- Can begin multiple levels of eye-hand coordination games

Language Development

- Can introduce topics as they relate to other topics
- Can use multiple sentences to describe needs, wants and desires
- Understands past, present and future
- Forms correct sentences
- Can use objects to create an entire fantasy role
- Can stay focused on stories and recount the events
- Can sit in story time for 15-20 minutes
- Begins to understand letter concepts

Physical, Spatial, and Temporal Awareness

- Matches objects that have the same functions (comb and brush)
- Identifies familiar objects by touch when placed in a bag with two other objects
- Figures out which child is missing by looking at children who are present
- Can sort through shapes

Cognitive

- Understands why we pray to Hashem
- Understands concepts of holidays and symbols that relate to those holidays
- Understands that we make brachot before we eat
- Understands that we say the Birchat Hamazon after eating
- Understands that we read the Torah on Monday, Thursday and Shabbat
- Understands the basic story of the Parsha
- Understands why we do Miztvot
- Introduction to Hebrew words and phrases in a manner that relates to their daily life
- Understands how to create green, purple, orange, black, brown, and other multi-combinational colors
- Recognizes all colors
- Can count from one to ten
- Understands beginning, middle and end
- Can begin to follow sequential order of events
- Prefers challenging tasks when given a choice between easy and hard tasks

Developmental Goals for the EC-4 Program

Self-Awareness and Social Emotional Development

- Can display a high level of confidence and self esteem
- Children and parents develop strong connections and high levels of trust with teachers
- Strong sense of family and home, quotes parents as authorities
- Can negotiate with other children with some facilitation of teacher
- Understands rules of fair play
- Understands personal effect on the environment and action vs. reactions
- Can regulate emotional swings from happy to sad to angry, etc.
- Can understand role as listener and understands role as community member

Motor Development

- Can negotiate large climber with little support from teachers
- Multiple levels of eye-hand coordination, can ride tricycle
- Holds writing instrument with appropriate grip
- Can cut with scissors proficiently
- Can manage with most fine motor activities with little support of teachers

Language Development

- Can regulate thought patterns to explain ideas in a focused manner
- Understands multiple meanings of words
- Can formulate a story by using visual cues
- Understands past, present and future and how it pertains to language
- Can hold a meaningful and focused conversation
- Recognizes most of the ABC's
- Begins to associate appropriate sounds with letters

Physical, Spatial, and Temporal Awareness

- Can begin to understand abstract concepts and ideas
- Complete understanding of visual mass: heavier, lighter, greater and less than
- Begins to understand proper direction of Hebrew words vs. English words

Cognitive

- Recognizes some of the alef-bet
- Can relate some sounds to some of the letters
- Understands that we read Torah three times a week
- Knows the name of each weekly Parsha
- Knows the story of the Parsha during the week that is read
- Knows all symbols and concepts related to holidays
- Knows all Brachot associated with each type of food
- Understands that we say Birchat Hamazon after we eat
- Begins to use Al Hamichia and Borei Nefashot
- Begins to use Asher Yatzar after use of bathroom
- Beginning understanding of concrete math concepts

Developmental Goals for the Kindergarten Program

In Kindergarten, children continue to build on their skills having a growth mindset. We encourage children to be resilient and learn through their errors, and use them to further their knowledge base. Students begin to formally use the past information that they have gained of literacy and begin to apply it to learning how to apply phonics and blending, through the use of our Super Kids Program and Handwriting Without Tears, in their ability to learn to read and write in both Hebrew and English.

Parsha, Tefillah and Chagim

- Will learn age appropriate Tefillot.
- Will learn Parsha and story associated with the Parsha.
- Knows symbols and concepts related to Chagim.

Reading

- Recognizes the letters of the alef bet and Abc's.
- Begins to combine two Hebrew letters to create new sounds.
- Can associate sounds to consonant letters
- Can read words taught in curriculum both in Hebrew and English.
- Retells simple narrative stories or information.
- Uses descriptive language to explain and explore.
- Can make inferences, predictions and sequence of story