

We believe that all children have a right to learn and are able to learn

In the Early Learning Centre we encourage the development of the whole child. Providing a strong foundation from which children can grow to become active participants in life-long learning forms the basis of our philosophy. We provide an environment in which they feel safe and secure whilst remaining confident enough to engage in experiences and explore their surroundings.

The program is designed to encompass all areas of development including cognitive, social, emotional, physical, communication and language. The focus is on continuity, possibilities and relationships. Throughout the year play is a key aspect of the program. Research indicates that much of a child's early learning is achieved through play, a belief strongly supported by philosophers, early childhood educators and psychologists (Vygotsky 1978; Malaguzzi 1994; Tishman & Perkins 1997-2000).

A child's active participation in the program will provide opportunities for them to:

- develop confidence in themselves and their ability to learn;
- demonstrate curiosity and the ability to focus their attention;
- acquire skills in communication;
- develop social skills and abilities which enable them to relate to others; and
- remain true to their individual natures, being free to develop their own potential.

By allowing a child to have options, we implicitly communicate our belief in them and their ability. We empower children to take control of their own learning. Our program reflects the children's interests. Goals and outcomes are identified from observations and focus on the next steps in learning. We work in partnership with parents and the community and our program therefore also reflects these shared goals.

Central to our philosophy of early childhood are the beliefs that our ELC students are:

- engaged in joyful learning experiences which are derived from the children, their parents, the school community and the teachers;
- learning to understand and regulate their emotions, build positive self-esteem and foster the development of strong meaningful relationships with others;
- independent, creative learners and critical thinkers who ask questions, hypothesise and actively explore the world around them;
- aware of their surroundings and develop a respect for their environment;
- provided with multiple oral language experiences throughout the day which develop, support and extend them in their learning;
- given opportunities for differentiated instruction (individually or as part of a group) in order to meet the needs of each learner;
- engaged in authentic (real life) writing and reading every day (for example when writing a note for visitors or reading a letter received);
- engaged in mathematical problem solving experiences (for example during block building);
- open and receptive to receiving oral descriptive feedback, which builds on their strengths, and they understand how to use the given feedback to improve and broaden their skills and abilities; and
- responsible members of the communities they live in.