

HILLCREST SENIOR KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

PERSONAL & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT – INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

The children investigate the world in which they live and find their place in it. To encourage your child in this area, our objectives in SK are to:

- * develop an awareness of being a good citizen
- * form an appreciation and respect for self, others and the environment
- * demonstrate a sense of identity and a positive self-image
- * demonstrate independence, self-regulation, and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities
- * demonstrate an ability to use problem-solving skills in a variety of social contexts
- * demonstrate an awareness of their surroundings

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

“A child’s name has singular importance as he embarks on learning about literacy. It enhances his security and his self-image, giving him a feeling of importance.” (Marie Clay, The Observation Survey)

What are **sight words** and why are they so important? Sight words are considered to be those words that occur frequently in our written language. To become a functional reader, students must be able to quickly identify these words. Students who have automatic word identification skills also have well-developed comprehension skills and are able to read fluently.

Sight words are introduced on a weekly basis, in a specific order, which helps increase their fluency and comprehension skills.

Children learn about language as they use it. We encourage them to develop their skills by listening, talking, reading and writing. It is important for the children to learn the skills of literacy, which is how to communicate their thoughts effectively to others through speaking, writing and using various media.

Our objectives are:

Talking

- * share and identify experiences and feelings
- * ask and answer questions
- * listen to and follow through with simple directions
- * speak in full sentences
- * expand their vocabulary using clear enunciation
- * articulation of thoughts (both own and others)
- * voice projection

Listening

- * critical listening to stories of peers and adults (and subsequent comprehension and retention of information)
- * recognition of rhyming words

Reading

- * recognize that illustrations and print have meaning
- * recognize upper and lower case letters
- * recognize letter blends and related sounds
- * enjoy reading and being read to
- * recognize and comprehend word families and high frequency sight words
- * encourage the children to read and understand words found in common places such as books, magazines, websites, signs, advertisements and even in conversation

Writing

- * print their own name
- * use drawings and words to represent words and ideas
- * inventive spelling
- * print upper and lower case letters

JOLLY PHONICS

Jolly Phonics is a phonics-based system for teaching children how to read. It was developed in Suffolk, England and has an extremely high rate of success in teaching all children to read well. It is based on the fact that there are more than 40 sounds in English and 26 letters that are used to represent these sounds. For reading and writing, children must be able to say the sounds that correspond with the letters.

Studies have shown that young children are able to learn more quickly when there is an action involved and the more dramatic and exaggerated the action, the more the children will remember. By performing an action for each letter sound, the children are using body movements, ears, eyes and speech to help them remember. This multi-sensory approach is a very effective way of teaching as well as being enjoyable for the children. Once these sounds have been mastered, the children are taken through the stages of blending sounds to form words and then to read.

HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS

Nursery and JK children use uppercase letter wood pieces and our smile face slates to learn tips for developing good posture and paper placement. As they proceed to SK, we then promote pre-pencil readiness activities that teach lowercase letters and numbers. We extend this learning to include the proper formation of lower and uppercase letters. Please remind your child to start at the top when printing.

READING PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is for children to familiarize themselves with books and not necessarily to learn how to read. We want to foster a love for books and reading, and for your child to experience success and enjoyment through an introduction to reading. We can do this through praise and encouragement. With the use of the Word Wall, Book Bags, Word Families and other tools, the children will quickly develop the necessary reading skills. This year the children will participate in Raz Kids Online. This is an extension to our current reading program. This is a fun and interactive way for the children to monitor their own reading progress. Until the children become more familiar with the program, we ask the parents to assist and guide the children through this process. We strive to keep this experience positive, and above all, have fun!

MORNING ROUTINE

We have incorporated "The Question of the Day" into our morning routine. This adds a new aspect to our learning strategy.

1. Responsibility: They will have to sign the board to show their attendance each morning.
2. Reading: The children will be encouraged to read the question and know how to answer independently.
3. Thinking: What's my answer? Some questions will have specific answers, others will be open-ended.
4. Work Together: Cooperating as a group/class
5. Math: counting and graphing

CIRCLE TIME

Circle is a discussion period and a learning experience that allows the children to contribute and express their thoughts and ideas on a specific theme.

The objectives of circle time are to enhance the children's:

- * listening and receptive skills
- * speaking skills (ie. voice projection, enunciation)
- * ability to co-operate with each other
- * opportunity to participate in a large and/or small group discussions
- * development of pre-reading skills (ie. left to right progression)
- * respect for others, turn-taking, patience

STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math

STEAM is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. The end results are students who take thoughtful risks engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders and learners of the 21st century!

SCIENCE

Inherent curiosity motivates children to explore their environment. They learn to look for clues which allow them to problem solve.

Our science objectives are:

- * to observe and manipulate the environment
- * to learn to question what we see
- * to make predictions based on logic
- * to articulate discoveries

TECHNOLOGY – SMART BOARD

Is an interactive medium for the children to experiment with and learn new concepts. Through the Smart Board, we develop hands on lessons for the children to interact, manipulate and feel a sense of accomplishment when working on new activities.

- * morning message
- * calendar
- * introduction of new math and cognitive concepts
- * introduction of Handwriting Without Tears (printing)
- * interactive games which enhance eye-hand coordination

ENGINEERING - SHELF TOYS – 3D BUILDING

Through exposure to toys, children progress through the three stages of play. At the Senior Kindergarten level, most children have progressed from solitary play to parallel or social play. Shelf toys are comprised of construction toys (ie. lego), social toys (ie. doll house), puzzles and co-operative games.

- * language development
- * intellectual development
- * imagination
- * fantasy play/co-operative play
- * math readiness (1-1 correspondence, matching, counting, sorting, shapes, colours)
- * fine motor skills

ART

Our Art History based curriculum provides the children with the opportunity to experiment while learning about Art and its history. The classes will be comprehensive and process-focused and will balance learning, exploring various artistic techniques and creative/emotional expression. The program will involve a variety of art media including painting, collage and sculpture.

MATHEMATICS

We are following the NELSON Math program. This year we will cover:

Data Management and Probability:

- gathering of information
- sorting that information
- once data is gathered make representations of their observations using concrete graphs i.e. picture graph, bar graph etc...
- reporting the information gathered i.e. YES/NO chart, Sukkot fruit graph
- Probability involves the use of mathematical language to describe the level of certainty
i.e chance, never, sometimes, always

Measurement:

- done through the use of paper clips, rulers, measuring tape, blocks, etc...

Time:

- explain the use of a clock
- small hand tells hour
- big hand tells minutes
- counting of 5 minutes
- explanation of time of day i.e. breakfast is in the AM, dinner is in the PM

Money:

penny = 1 cent
nickel = 5 cents
dime = 10 cents
quarter = 25 cents

Number Sense:

- early number
- working on five
- number to ten
- beyond ten

Patterning:

- identifying & extending patterns
- creating & translating patterns

Spatial Sense

- describing position & location
- exploring 3-D shapes
- exploring 2D shapes

HEBREW

During the weekly Hebrew program, the children are encouraged to speak the language through games, songs, repetition and by labeling many visual props. The children will learn Hebrew names for the Jewish holidays and their symbols. They will also acquire an everyday, basic vocabulary, such as greetings, people in the family, body parts, seasons, gender, colours, counting, and more!

The SK children will also learn to recognize the Hebrew alphabet and will be bringing home worksheets which reinforce the learning at school.

JEWISH HERITAGE PROGRAM

The children celebrate Shabbat every Friday. You are welcome to join in this special time with your child. Please contact your child's teacher to arrange a mutually agreeable date. Jewish Holidays are introduced and celebrated through storytelling, songs and creative activities. Our regular newsletters and communications will advise you of all our special events.

FRENCH

We provide a weekly French Language program for all our Kindergarten students. The children will be introduced to the letters of the alphabet and simple words. We are confident that this program will enable the children to acquire a basic everyday vocabulary!

MUSIC WITH KAYLA & GREG

Daily musical activities are carefully designed to help the children develop motor, auditory and rhythmic skills. Group participation, imaginative expression and building of self-esteem are naturally incorporated into the musical experience. Unique songs, school wide music circles and day-to-day programming provide endless opportunities for fun and laughter.

OUTDOOR PLAY/SPORTS PROGRAM

The playground offers a large variety of areas for the development of various skills and our weekly sports program offers a challenging and age appropriate program focussing on skill development in a variety of sports.

The objectives in these activities are:

- * to develop gross motor skills (co-ordination, balance, strength)
- * to gain confidence
- * to promote dramatic and imaginative play
- * to enhance social and co-operative skills
- * to develop and refine sports skills
- * to release energy and have fun

GYMNASTICS

In the spring, students will participate in a recreational gymnastics program at Discovery School Of Sport & Art in North York. Children will travel by school bus once a week for eight weeks and enjoy a fully instructed class for one hour. The NCCP certified instructors will guide the children to develop basic gymnastics skills on all the gymnastics events including a specialized Kindergym area with specially sized equipment. Children will develop coordination, strength and flexibility while having fun!

MUSIC WITH MISS DRISCOLL:

In this music program, the children will be introduced to the basic vocabulary to understand music. Through the use of interactive games on the Smart Board, playing instruments, singing and group activities and games, the children will learn about beat, pitch, tempo and rhythm. In addition, children will be exposed to a variety of music and instruments from around the world and be given the opportunity to make their own music.

SEE SAW APP

We are happy to have incorporated "SEE SAW" into our program. It is an app that is downloadable to any smart phone, where teachers post photos and classroom news. It helps to keep you informed of the fun activities that take place during the school day and enables teachers to share important and general information with you!

