

Bialik College

IN 2016, Bialik was the number-one, top performing VCE school in the state and for 19 out of 20 years, the college has been in the top 5. How is this phenomenal academic record achieved? The answer may surprise – it starts in the Early Learning Centre and filters through every subsequent year level.

From the earliest years, students at Bialik are exposed to

exciting programs that complement their education and help shape a child's positive attitude towards future learning and participation in group activities.

In prep, every young student is mentored with a year 12 'buddy', with whom they develop a close bond. They get together during the year for fun activities and at the chagim. A highlight for both the preps and the year 12s is the Prep/Year 12 model Pesach seder. The students sing, read from the Haggadah and laugh together, enhancing the social and learning experience for all involved.

Leading the way in innovative education, Bialik introduced the 'Dogs for Life' program in 2014 for ELC and early primary,

becoming the first mainstream school in Australia to bring service animals into the classroom. Now in its fourth year, this exciting program is geared towards building social and emotional intelligence by teaching students key concepts such as verbal and non-verbal communication, rights and responsibilities and conflict resolution.

Creativity and the arts are important for building positive attitudes towards learning. In 2017, year 2 students will learn woodworking skills from Bialik's artist-in-residence, Bruce Bellman. The program provides both a means of creative expression and also a chance to explore the physical science of forces.

Creativity is also encouraged with lunchtime electives like Art Club, Dance Club, Woodworking and Makerspace. In the Makerspace students can make, tinker and play – pull things apart, put things together and improve and develop their ideas and designs. Some areas that are explored include circuits, programming, 3D printing and gaming.

A Primary Robotics Club has also been added to the line-up of lunchtime activities during which students will collaborate in an enriching and inspiring environment, using LEGO to personalise and program all sorts of robotic creations.

Back in the classroom, the years 4 and 5 students have the opportunity to join the Hebrew-English bilingual class, in which 40 per cent of the curriculum is taught in

Hebrew. Also, in 2017, the entire year 4 cohort will be focusing on digital literacy and in year 5, students will be engaging with neuroscience.

Years 2-4 will continue the amazing workshops with the Resilience Project's Hugh Var Cuylenberg. Hugh visits the college regularly, working with the students to develop healthy social skills, mindfulness and positivity.

Finally, in order to excel in future learning and growth, all students are given the opportunity to lead their peers. Each year 5 student is given a role in the Manhigut program. Students can select from six leadership portfolios – Jewish Life and Zionism, Social Action, Sports, Science and Sustainability, Technology and Assembly – something to suit the needs and passions of each individual.



Bialik students Dalia Blecher and Pia Dabscheck on the first day of prep.