

# What makes Bialik College different?

## BIALIK COLLEGE

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One way of articulating Bialik's very strong Jewish ethos is with the statement: "we don't preach, we teach". A core value of Bialik College is to respect individual choice of expression when it comes to Jewish identity. The teaching is expansive and inclusive, demonstrating to students the rich mosaic of our Jewish tradition that encompasses ideologies and practices across the full spectrum of mainstream Judaism – from Orthodox to Progressive and from Secular to Conservative. Students are empowered, from a knowledgeable base, to choose how to express themselves according to their own, and their family's own preferences.

In a practical sense, this translates into students being given the choice of which siddur they would like to receive in honour of their bat or bar mitzvah. It means that the school's canteen is fully kosher to accommodate everyone, but student's private lunches are not "policed". It means tefillot (prayers) are taught throughout the Primary and Middle schools, from birchat hamazon to Shema and from the Shabbat service to Rosh Chodesh, but in the Senior school, services are optional and are led by students for students. And it means that when there is debate about Israel, our school's proud Zionism and support is unwavering while at the same time, debate is openly encouraged and tolerated. Bialik's healthy approach to Judaism best reflects the plurality of our thriving and dynamic Melbourne Jewish community.

Academically, Bialik also leads the field not only in consistently outstanding VCE results – top 5 in the State for 20 of the last 21 years – but in innovative and cutting-edge programs that stimulate and engage students in myriads of ways. Whether it's about learning to run a business, designing Apps, or constructing robots and drones through to using dogs as a conduit of learning in the ELC and Primary school, the College is quick to respond to new approaches and ideas. Bialik's initiatives in STEM for instance have been so successful that there has been an exponential increase in girls studying forensic science and STEM electives into Senior school.

But perhaps the area in which Bialik shines best, is the family atmosphere and care that permeates the environment of the school. With everyone on one campus, from ELC to VCE, respectful relationships are ingrained into the fabric of the school with mentorship programs between older and younger students and leadership opportunities from Year 5 through to Year 12 that are based on individual students volunteering to take on more responsibility rather than being voted into position by others.

*There is a lot more to Bialik than some may realise, and the surprises are delightful. Find out for yourself at Bialik's upcoming Information Evening on Tuesday 15 May at 7.30pm. RSVP essential: [RSVP@bialik.vic.edu.au](mailto:RSVP@bialik.vic.edu.au)*