

CLASS TEACHERS PROGRAM:

In order to enable our students to learn English effectively, a bilingual language program is applied in the main class with one Turkish and one English homeroom teacher. Studies on language development show that, when young children are exposed to all languages, they provide a different academic advantage throughout life. Bilingual children focus more on the issues at hand. They also demonstrate a higher level of cognitive flexibility or the ability to alter environmental and situational responses. Dual language programs offer students a broader worldview regardless of their native language and provide greater opportunities for collaborative learning.

Young children learn best through activities that are relevant to their lives and varied enough to be challenging and engaging. Children develop their knowledge by building on their past experiences and the learning they have already acquired. Since most children believe that learning is a pleasurable experience, they are naturally inclined and even eager to learn when they first come to school.

Each child grows and develops in various interrelated areas – physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and linguistic. In order to address the full range of each child’s developmental needs, the Preschool program should provide opportunities for learning, self-expression, and self-discovery in a variety of areas – for example, in music, drama, games, language activities, and cooperative activities with peers.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. Each child is unique and has individual needs. Some children will benefit more from one type of teaching strategy than another; some may need more time than others, and/or additional resources, to achieve the learning expectations. In addition, the diverse cultural and linguistic realities of the children contribute to variations in the ways in which they develop and demonstrate their learning. Children therefore need opportunities to learn in an appropriate manner and at an appropriate time in their development, and need to be given learning experiences that are within the range of things they can do with and without guidance (in their “zone of proximal development”).

Preschool teachers perform a complex and multidimensional role. They are responsible for implementing a program that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, integrated,

developmentally appropriate, and culturally and linguistically responsive, and that promotes positive outcomes for all children. A developmentally appropriate Preschool program is challenging, but has expectations that are attainable for most children. The program should be flexible enough to respond to individual differences and should be consistent with children's ways of thinking and learning. In order to support the continuum of learning from one grade to the next, Preschool teachers need to be aware of the curriculum expectations for Grade 1 and later primary grades. Knowledge of the literacy and numeracy continua, in particular, is critical for teachers as they lay the foundation for learning.

Our teachers use reflective practice, planned observation, and a range of assessment strategies to identify the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children in order to provide instruction that is appropriate for each child ("differentiated instruction"). They plan whole-class instruction, small-group learning, independent learning, and activities at learning centers. There should also be a balance between teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities – times when the teacher guides the children's learning and times when children are given opportunities to choose activities to demonstrate their knowledge.

Learning experiences should promote integrated learning and allow children to handle, explore, and experiment with a variety of materials that are familiar to them or that they can connect to everyday life. Teachers should also use their knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which the children live to develop and provide learning experiences that are meaningful, relevant, and respectful. We have consultations with parents,² caregivers, resource teachers, teacher assistants, early childhood educators, and children themselves are an important part of the complex process of program planning. Our teachers work with these partners to gather and share information on the strengths, needs, interests, abilities, and learning styles of the children in the class, so that they can better select materials and resources and can plan and organize appropriate learning experiences. In their relations with families, teachers play an important role in facilitating the significant transition that children face between their home and the school environment. Ongoing communication between families and teachers results in a smoother transition for children, and is a key strategy in building bridges between home and school. Our teachers are culturally aware, and encourage parents to become involved in school life and to take an active part in their child's education.

ACTIVITIES

End of the School Year Festivities

Towards the end of the second term parents are invited for students to showcase their end of the year project and celebrate their completion of Preschool with activities and events prepared by Preschool teachers.

Library Visits

At SEV we believe tha reading is a very important element of language acquisition. Therefore, pre-reading skills are given high priority at SEV. Every week our KPreschool students visit the library where our SEV English Library program fosters a passion for reading through various activities that our students love taking part in. Our library staff and teachers make both SEV Elementary School library a major attraction for our students.

Open House

Open House is a day when our parents are invited to see an exhibition of our classrooms and group activity work. The date of the open house is announced in the beginning of the academic year.

Educational Trips

As a part of our education philosophy, in order to give our students the opportunity for various hands-on learning experiences, we include field trips in our curriculum. Academic trips are organized for all levels. Related with their curriculum, starting with camping trip in grade 3, overnight trips are arranged.

Research Projects

The Preschool students prepare research project in various subjects. The basic aim of the research projects is to help students to develop different research skills and as well as planning skills and time management skills. The important aspect of the project is the process itself.

End of Term/End of School Year Performances

It is the occasion when the performance club students present their performances for the families.