

# Erdi Elwood Hebrew School HANDBOOK



**Erdi Elwood Hebrew School**  
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Dear Parents,

One can never say enough about valuing our children's education! Judaism has always taught and stressed the importance of study and learning.

Through our Hebrew School we will instill in our students a love for Judaism, the Torah, the Jewish people and the Land of Israel, as well as an appreciation for our rich heritage, and confidence in our Jewish identity and Hebrew reading.

A fresh, positive and fun approach and lots of enthusiasm is the hallmark of our Hebrew School.

A home-school partnership is imperative in achieving our objectives. We need your cooperation and active participation. The old saying, "children learn what they live," is particularly true with regard to Jewish education. We hope that you and your children will make Jewish education a priority.

This handbook is designed to inform you of our Hebrew School's policies, as well as encourage your input and participation in our program. Please view this handbook as an ongoing invitation to actively pursue the goals we share, at home and within your congregational setting.

We're looking forward to an enriching year with your child!

Sincerely,



Rabbi Shmuel & Rivki Karnowsky  
Elwood Hebrew School Directors



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## About us

Elwood Hebrew School has a stimulating and friendly environment, where children can embrace their Jewish roots and gain a true sense of Jewish pride.

Throughout the year the children will cover Hebrew reading and writing, Jewish festivals, our history, Israel, the Torah, Jewish pride and values and so much more. All lessons are run in a fun, interactive way including arts & crafts, plays, activities and workbooks. Classes are kept small to give each child the attention he or she may need.

**Our goal is simple:** By year's end, along with the Aleph-Bet, Holiday learning and Hebrew literacy, your child will have developed a deep love and appreciation for their precious heritage, imbuing their every day with a sense of pride and purpose.

**Our underlying approach** is for the children to enjoy the time spent at Hebrew school so that they are left with positive feelings and fond memories of their Jewish education.

**Our school welcomes every Jewish child**, regardless of religious background or level of observance. It is for this reason that we do not require any membership or prior affiliation to be part of our Hebrew School family.

### **We endeavour that each of our students should...**

- Attain a strong sense of love of Judaism and pride in being Jewish.
- Feel a sense of belonging in the Jewish community, to find their unique place in Jewish history, and to share in the destiny of the Jewish people.
- Discover and explore the Torah, the incredible history of the Jewish people and see its relevance in modern times.
- Gain an understanding of the practices and traditions of Judaism.
- Know the morals and values taught by our Torah.
- Have a hands-on experience and appreciation for all Jewish holidays.
- Master Hebrew reading and writing skills.
- Learn basic prayers so they will feel comfortable when attending Shule.
- Identify with the Land of Israel and its people.
- Feel comfortable expressing their opinions and questions.

Indeed, a child equipped with an education and a feeling for Judaism's beautiful teachings, traditions, and historical lessons is a child better equipped to face the awesome moral challenges of today's society.



## **Curriculum**

### **Torah and Jewish History**

The children are introduced to the characters and stories of the Torah. They are given an overview of Jewish history starting with the creation of the world till modern times.

### **Shabbat and Chagim (Holidays)**

Through hands-on lessons and activities the students will gain a deeper understanding of Shabbat and each Holiday, their traditions, customs and celebration, as we go through the year. We will also host Holiday celebrations for our students and their families.

### **Jewish Values and Ethics**

Our students will explore and gain an understanding of the values and Mitzvot integrated into Jewish culture including; respect, gratitude and Tzedakah, Mezuzah and Kosher. We also explore the environment, cleanliness, appreciation, humility, proper treatment of animals and happiness.

### **Israel**

Our Students will explore the significance and beauty of Israel - past, present and future. In story and in song, we emphasize the inherent connection of every Jew to our Homeland, Israel.

### **Hebrew**

Our students learn to read and write Hebrew. They gain confidence and familiarity with the Siddur - Prayer Book. We also implement the successful and effective 'Aleph is for Apple' and 'Aleph Champ' Programs.

### **Aleph Champ**

From Grade 1+ we use the world acclaimed Aleph Champ Program. Modelled after the Karate/Martial Arts motivational system, it works by dividing different reading skills into levels defined by colour. White Aleph Champion to Black Aleph Champion!



## Commitment to safeguarding children and young people

Your child's safety is our number one priority; we at Elwood Shule have made a commitment that all our staff and volunteers will act to safeguard children and young people by:

- Adopting appropriate practices and behaviour; and
- Reporting any abuse by staff or volunteers within our organization or by others.

We have communicated our commitment to all our staff and volunteers and given them access to a copy of our commitment statement.

**We believe children who come to our Hebrew School, Shule and functions should:**

- feel comfortable
- be cared for
- feel safe and be safe.

Everyone who works here does their best to make sure children are protected from any harm.

**Our Hebrew School students are made aware, in language they can understand, that:**

- It is not okay for anyone to hurt your feelings or your body.
- It is okay for you to say NO to an adult if they ask you to do something that makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- If you ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable we will listen to you and act to help you.
- It is always okay to tell someone if you are not feeling comfortable or safe or if you have been hurt.
- If you are unhappy with the way you are being treated please tell a staff member or a parent.

### Child Protection Policy

Rabbi Shmuel & Rivki both have Working with Children Check and have completed a training course through Australian Childhood Foundation's Safeguarding Children Program.

We have also worked with the ACF to develop a comprehensive child protection policy and procedures, to which our Board of Management, staff and volunteers will be 100% committed to, ensuring that all children attending our programs are given the best care in the safest environment possible.

To read more about the program through which we are undergoing accreditation, please visit [www.safeguardingchildren.com.au](http://www.safeguardingchildren.com.au) and [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au).



## General Information

Our program is designed for children from Prep - Grade 6.

Every Jewish child, regardless of religious background or level of observance is welcome. Children from a variety of public and private schools are currently enrolled.

We do not require any membership or prior affiliation to be part of our Hebrew School family.

### Times and dates

Classes are held on Tuesdays from 4.00 - 5.30pm in Elwood Shule. The first 45 minutes of each class is focused on gratitude, Tefila (Prayer) and the Jewish lessons curriculum followed by the second 45 minutes of Hebrew reading and writing program.

The Hebrew School calendar follows the Victorian public school term dates with the exception of Jewish festivals. Upon registration, you will receive a yearly calendar with all the exact dates. Please be sure to use this calendar as your reference guide throughout the year.

## Parent/School Communication

Communication between parents and school is very important to ensure that Hebrew School be an enjoyable and productive experience for every child. You are encouraged to get involved, ask questions and keep in touch with us. Feel free to contact us at any time on [rabbishmuel@elwoodshule.org](mailto:rabbishmuel@elwoodshule.org).

We also have a Hebrew school WhatsApp group for weekly updates, photos and announcements.

## Confidential Information

Please provide information about any conditions that may affect your child's ability to learn in a classroom setting. Prior knowledge of any physical, social or psychological challenges can aid a teacher in planning instruction for each child. Such information should be submitted in writing or discussed in private with Rabbi Shmuel.

## Personal Belongings

We recommend the students do not bring any personal items along with them. We do not assume any responsibility for these items.



## Food

Healthy snacks and drinks will be provided by Hebrew School each week.

**Kosher** - All food and drinks brought to Hebrew School must be Kosher.

**Food allergy sensitive environment** - We recognize that food allergies can cause serious, life threatening conditions for some students. We therefore ask no nuts or food containing nuts be brought to Hebrew School.

## Behavioural Expectations

At Elwood Hebrew School we strive to create an atmosphere that reflects Jewish values.

Therefore we expect:

1. Respect for teachers, for each other and each other's property, and respect for oneself.
2. Classroom directions to be followed promptly.

## Hebrew School Responsibilities

1. Provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment for your child.
2. Provide your child with a suitable, capable and knowledgeable teacher who is dedicated and concerned about your child's Jewish education.
3. Give your child knowledge of Hebrew, Torah, and Israel; expose them to Jewish holidays, history, customs and traditions.
4. Keep you informed of your child's progress and class activities.
5. Provide your family with opportunities to learn, experience and enjoy our Jewish heritage.

## Parents' Responsibilities

1. Bring and pick up children on time.
2. Be positive about Hebrew School programming. Take an active part in your child's Jewish education. Contact the director or teacher regarding any classroom concern.
3. Check children's school bags for homework and important notices.



## **Tzedakah**

Tzedakah (charity) is a concept which is basic to Judaism. We attempt to develop a commitment among our students to share with others less fortunate by donating a coin or two to charity. Parents are asked to provide their child with a coin for Tzedakah each week.

## **Mitzvah Note**

Teachers may ask parents of younger children to send in a mitzvah note. This is a note that relays something special that the child has done. Children look forward to hearing what their parents have to say. Please be sure to send in a Mitzvah Note if it is requested.

## **At home**

Students are encouraged to practice their reading at home. Parents should listen to their child's Hebrew reading, songs and stories, as this will reinforce your involvement in your child's Jewish education. Try to make this a regular part of your routine on a consistent basis.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is crucial to the success of your child's education.

There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement, interest and attitude.

## **Pick Up**

Please pick up your child from his/her classroom. No child will be permitted to wait outside. Please notify the Rabbi Shmuel or Rivki if someone other than a parent will be picking up your child.

## **Access code**

Upon registration you will receive the 4 digit access code for the front gate.

## **Illness**

Please notify us in case of contagious sickness, so that we may notify the parents of the other children in the class to be aware of the symptoms. Please also let us know of any changes in your child's health during the year e.g. vision, hearing etc. This will help us understand and cater to his/her needs.



## **First Aid**

The teacher will attend to minor injuries. Should something more serious occur, G-d forbid, attempt will be made to contact the parents immediately. In the case of emergency of any significant illness or injury an ambulance and/or Hatzalah will be called.

## **Parent Absence**

If for any reason, parents will be away from home for any length of time, please advise us. This is especially important if the absence is due to special conditions, such as hospitalization, which may be upsetting to the child.

## **School Records**

Parents should notify the school promptly of any change in address, telephone number, e-mail address, or other pertinent emergency contact information. Promptness and accuracy are necessary to keep records up to date and to communicate with parents.

## **Visitors**

Parents wishing to visit the classrooms must make prior arrangements with the teacher. Teachers are not permitted to converse with parents while the class is in progress. However, they will be pleased to talk after class.

## **Tuition**

Tuition is due prior to each term. If you supplied credit card information on your application form, the appropriate amount will be debited at the start of each term.

No child will be turned away due to lack of funds – Please call our office to discuss

## **Refund Policy**

Registration fees are non-refundable. Should you decide to withdraw your child from Hebrew School you will receive a pro-rated refund of tuition.

There are no refunds or credits for days missed due to illness, holidays or family vacations.

