

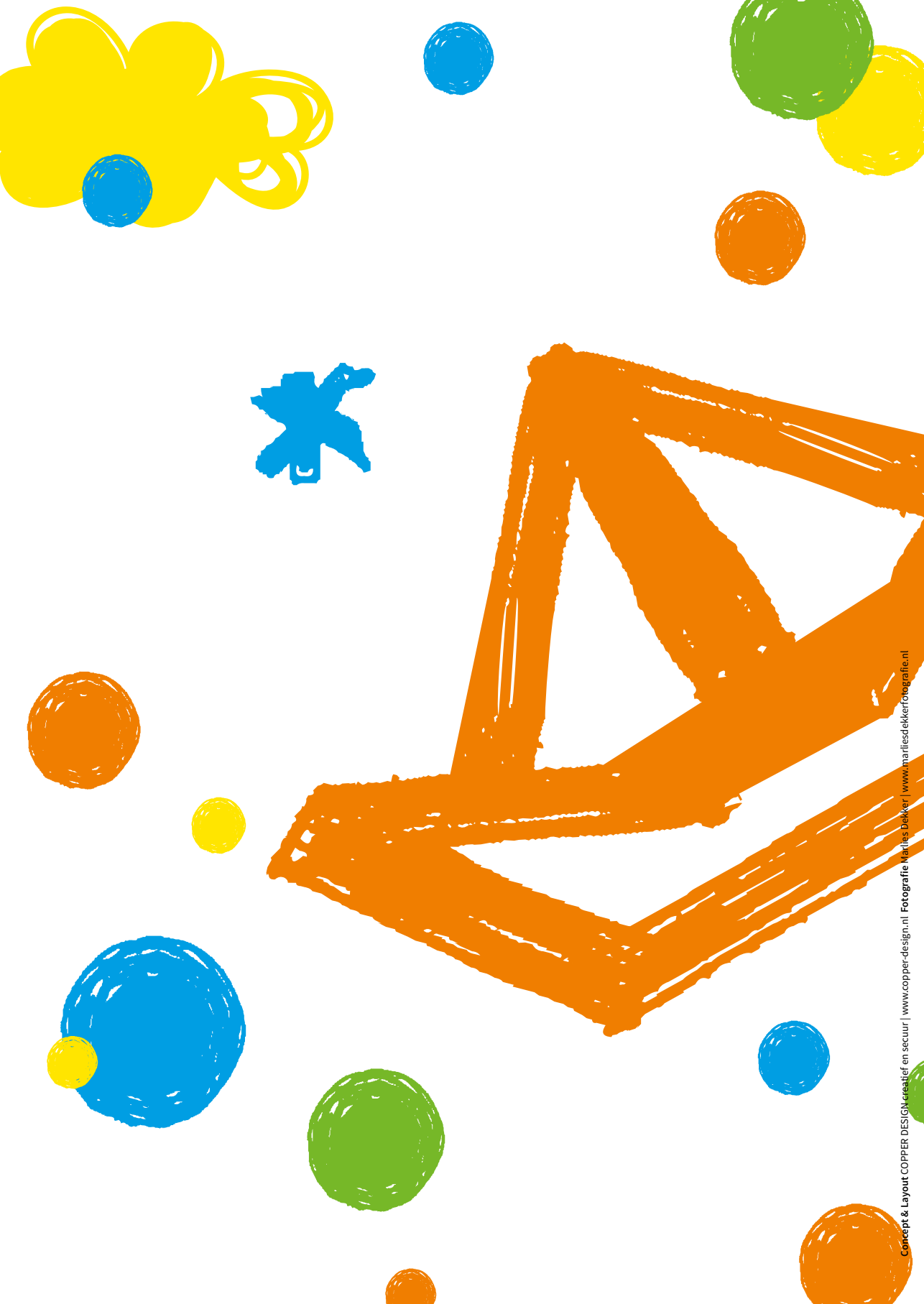
A photograph of two young women looking at a tablet. The woman on the left has dark hair in pigtails and is wearing a dark jacket. The woman on the right has light brown hair and is wearing a black hoodie with a floral pattern and the words 'NORTH' and 'CHICAGO' visible. The background is a blurred classroom setting.

**BRINGING  
OUT YOUR  
INNER MAGIC**

# **SCHOOL GUIDE**

**2023-2024**

**OPTIMIST  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL**






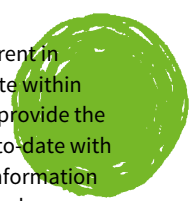
# WELCOME TO OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

We are a public international primary school situated in Hoofddorp, Haarlemmermeer, in the metropolitan region of Amsterdam. This guide is written for parents and carers (referred to as 'parents') who have chosen Optimist International School as the primary school for their child (ren) or who may wish for their child(ren) to attend the school. This guide focuses on our education, operational procedures and practical information. Along with providing you with this guide, we invite you to come and see the school with your own eyes. Parents are always welcome to visit Optimist International School. We would love to give you a tour.

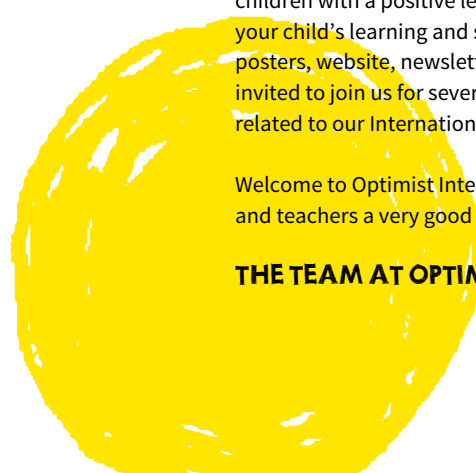
Our school is a public school providing primary education from 4 - 11 years old. Our language of instructions is English. We use the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) and the British National Curriculum and our core programme is based on the International Primary Curriculum. Learning guidance and our core programme is taken from the British National Curriculum for language and mathematics.



We believe great learning takes you to places beyond your wildest imagination and starts with "*I wonder...*". Our slogan "*Bringing out your inner magic*" reflects this. We provide a positive, meaningful, and challenging learning environment in which children use imagination and creativity to explore the rapidly changing world enabling them to become responsible learners, communicators, collaborators, and respectful global citizens.



We hope to build and maintain a good relationship with you as a parent in order to ensure that you and your child(ren) are able to fully integrate within our school community. Our staff and the parents work as a team to provide the children with a positive learning environment. We will keep you up-to-date with your child's learning and school events via our school app 'Parro', information posters, website, newsletters and posts on social media. You will also be invited to join us for several activities throughout the year, many of which are related to our International Primary Curriculum (IPC).



Welcome to Optimist International School and we wish all children, parents and teachers a very good and successful school year!

**THE TEAM AT OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

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# 1. MISSION, VISION AND CONTEXT

## 1.1 OUR MISSION

We provide a positive, meaningful, and challenging learning environment in which children use imagination and creativity to explore the rapidly changing world enabling them to become responsible learners, communicators, collaborators, and respectful global citizens.



*"The Dot" by Peter H. Reynolds*

*This book teaches growth mindset. Growth mindset believes that although you might not be able to do something now (yet), you will be able to do that in the near future with hard work, determination and support. "The dot" is a story about a teacher who believes in a child and the miraculous things that happen when you have a mentor in your life backing you up and cheering you on. Our dot, to be found in our logo resembles our vision on learning, continuously, lifelong.*

*A love of learning, and inspiring and challenging education: that's what we stand for!*

## 1.2 OUR VISION AND KEY VALUES

### WE HAVE AN INQUISITIVE MIND

We use imagination and creativity to explore our world, accept challenges and take risks. We search for a wide variety of learning opportunities. We choose how we demonstrate our learning in a varied manner, such as group work, art activities, role play, multimedia, projects and much more.

### WE ARE COMMUNICATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNERS

Our communicative skills illustrate our abilities, interests and opinions and are an integral part of our curricula. We discuss our skills, knowledge and understanding. We ask questions and give feedback to inspire, share and support each other.

### WE ARE INTERNATIONALLY MINDED CITIZENS

We come from different countries, celebrate our identities and are one optimistic community. In every class we value each other's beliefs and cultures, customs, and multilingualism.

We accomplish this by:

- ★ Offering the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) with a focus on not only academic goals but also personal goals and international mindedness
- ★ Offering teaching strategies and inquiry based classroom practices that encourage fun in learning and self-determination
- ★ Providing differentiated education, where the individual needs of each student are considered
- ★ Promoting the benefits of learning the English language, whilst celebrating the various cultures represented in our school as well as the Dutch language and culture (including taking part in local activities)
- ★ Offering a positive learning environment within which safety, honesty, structure and creativity play a leading role, whilst encouraging cooperation between children, teachers and parents
- ★ Celebrating diversity through the respect and appreciation of the various cultures represented in the school

## 1.3 CONTEXT

Optimist International School is a Dutch subsidised public international primary school. We operate within the framework of the Dutch educational system unlike private international facilities. As we are partly funded by the Dutch government, we can ensure that high quality education at our school remains affordable for expat families.

### DIPS

We are a member of the Dutch International Primary Schools (DIPS). The interests of DIPS schools are represented by this association through organisations and institutions such as the Department of Education (OCW) and the Primary Education Council. This gives us the opportunity to work together in a community of Dutch international schools. The principle aim of DIPS is to provide each child with such education that they are prepared optimally for either the transition to English language education abroad or a possible transition to full Dutch education. An additional aim is to provide each child with adequate knowledge of the Dutch language to enable them to participate in and be a part of Dutch society. Dutch international schools are acknowledged and funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science. Therefore eligibility requirements for admission to the schools are based on national regulations.

### OBS DE OPTIMIST

We have a connection with a Dutch primary school, OBS de Optimist, our sister school. Sometimes, students of both schools will work together or join to take part in special activities (such as Sports Day)

### INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION

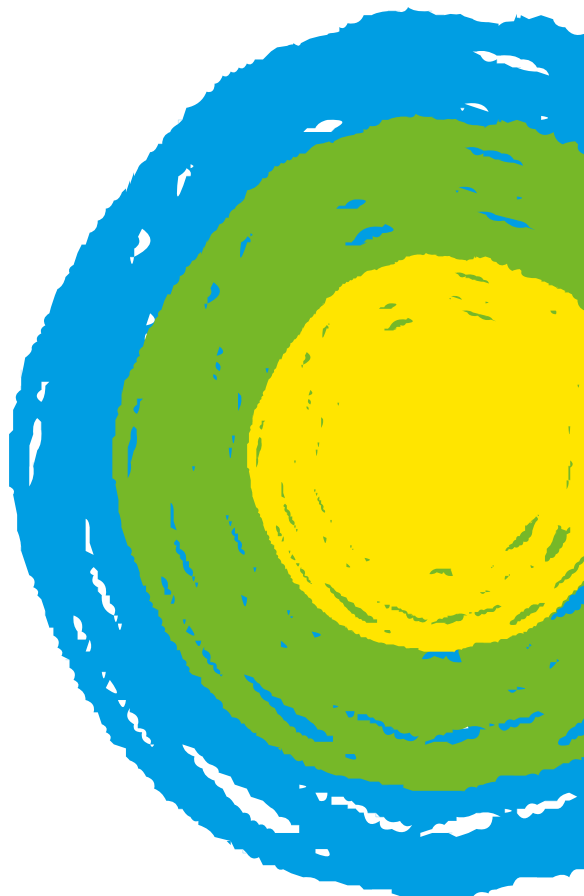
As a Dutch school we are accountable for high standards, provided by the Inspectorate of Education and the Inspection Framework. The Inspectorate evaluates the quality of education in a school or institution. Our school is part of an investigation cycle of four years. We will use recommendations from the Dutch inspectorate's report to achieve our current goals and to ensure we continue to improve.

### FLOREER

Our school is part of the Foundation for Primary Education Haarlemmermeer (Floreer), a public primary education institution which is a branch of the municipality of Haarlemmermeer. This school board governs 21 schools in Haarlemmermeer. Financial administration regarding staff and admissions and human resources is carried out by Floreer.

### SAMENWERKINGSVERBAND HAARLEMMEER

The Dutch law regarding inclusion (Wet Passend Onderwijs) was put into practice in August 2014. This ensures that schools in the Netherlands form a regional collaborative partnership ('samenwerkingsverband') to make agreements about support available to students and the appropriate place of education. Our collaboration model is called 'Passend Onderwijs Haarlemmermeer.'



## YOUTH HEALTH CARE

We consult with an external youth health care team for example our school doctor and school nurse from GGD, our school coach, social workers, speech therapists, physiotherapists, child coaches and educational psychologists.

## LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

We have partnerships with specialist providers and organisations for after school activities. We also work with organizations in Hoofddorp such as: Pier K for culture and art projects and Sportservice Haarlemmermeer for sports activities.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

We cooperate with three secondary schools nearby: The International School of Haarlem (distance approximately 10 km) an international secondary school, Haarlemmermeer Lyceum in Hoofddorp (distance approximately 1 km), offering a bilingual international programme for non-Dutch speakers. See chapter ‘Student monitoring, student support and transition’, and Het Rijnlands Lyceum International School, Oegstgeest, (distance approximately 25 km ) an international secondary school.

## EXPATS HAARLEMMERMEER

We have a close link with Expats Haarlemmermeer, which offers news, information, advice, cultural articles, events, meetups and services for internationals, expats & Dutch citizens in the Haarlemmermeer area.

## AFTER SCHOOL CARE / CHILDCARE IN SCHOOL

We work together with UniKidz which offers bilingual after school care in our school premises and daycare during holidays and study days, to OIS children according to the UniKidz International formula. Their offer includes after school activities. More information about UniKidz can be found on their website: UniKidz

Children from the ages of 6 weeks to 4 years old are welcome at the childcare centres in the local area.

- ★ Stichting Kinderopvang Haarlemmermeer (SKH, Childcare Haarlemmermeer), which is situated at our site. Their group is called Hasselbraam. They also have a sports group.  
More information about SKH can be found on their website: kinderopvanghaarlemmermeer.nl
- ★ Kindergarden Floriande, situated 1 km away from our school building, also offers these facilities.  
More information about Borus can be found on their website: kindergarden.nl
- ★ HappyKids has several locations in Hoofddorp, one of which in Floriande, and they have a transportation service to school. They also have a sports care group. More information about Happy Kids can be found on their website: happykids.nl





## 2. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL AND CLASSES

## 2.1 OUR CLASSES

On 4 September (school year 2023– 2024) OIS begins with 250 students divided into 15 groups:

- ★ **Two groups 1**
- ★ **Two groups 2**
- ★ **Two groups 3**
- ★ **Three groups 4 (one combination group)**
- ★ **Two groups 5**
- ★ **Two groups 6**
- ★ **Two groups 7**

Student will be placed in a class/milepost along with other students of the same or similar ages. This is the best place for social, and emotional development of children and it enables them to learn best from the curriculum. Exceptions to the age guidelines are made infrequently and only upon careful evaluation by Management. To start in Group 0 a student should turn four after 1 October of that year.

- ★ To start in Group 1 a student should be four or turn four after 1 October of that year.\*
- ★ To start in Group 2 a student should be five after 1 October of that year.
- ★ To start in Group 3 a student should be six after 1 October of that year.
- ★ To start in Group 4 a student should be seven after 1 October of that year.
- ★ To start in Group 5 a student should be eight after 1 October of that year.
- ★ To start in Group 6 a student should be nine after 1 October of that year.
- ★ To start in Group 7 a student should be ten after 1 October of that year.

\* Students of group 1 will be placed in Group 2 only if their birthday is before the 1 October term date cut off. Students 4 years old will continue in this class until the following year in which they are 5 years old.

Our grouping system can be compared to other international systems:

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	ENGLAND AND WALES		US AND CANADA
	Group 0	Reception/Foundation	Preschool
	Group 1	Reception/Foundation	Preschool
	Group 2	Key stage 1 - year 1	Kindergarten
	Group 3	Key stage 1 - year 2	Grade 1
	Group 4	Key stage 2 - year 3	Grade 2
	Group 5	Key stage 2 - year 4	Grade 3
	Group 6	Key stage 2 - year 5	Grade 4
	Group 7	Key stage 2 - year 6	Grade 5

We aim to have a maximum of 22 students per class.

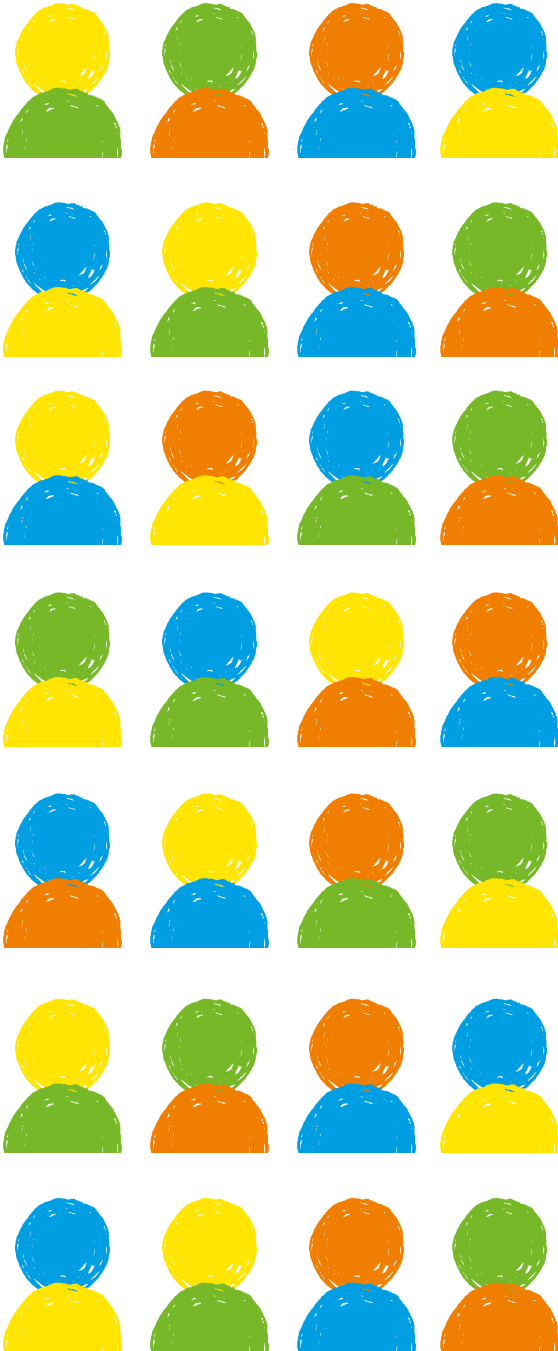
Classes who have (temporarily) more students are provided with extra teaching support. We can have single year groups, as well as combination classes, preferably within a milepost. In a combination group children of two year levels are being taught in the same class.

When placing students in a class or splitting a class, we take the profile of the group into consideration: mixed ability levels, social-emotional and learning diversity requirements, English language ability level and gender balance. At the end of each academic year our teaching staff, the Management Team will decide if a class will remain the same or will be mixed. Depending on the number of students new to a class or leaving, in exceptional cases we might have to split a group or combine two groups during the year.

There is a dynamic admissions system; students come and go throughout the entire school year (as is the nature of an international school).

## 2.2 OUR POPULATION

At the start of school year 2023- 2024 we had around 35 nationalities within our school.



## 2.3 OUR TEAM

Our team currently consists of 45 members. All classes have designated qualified teachers. In some cases the teaching responsibility is shared between two teachers, both working part-time. The class teachers are responsible for the learning outcomes of the curriculum offered. Our teachers are all fluent English speakers and come from all over the world. We have over 15 nationalities amongst our staff.

In addition, most have completed their education or teaching experience in an English-speaking country. Teachers within a milepost work collaboratively to produce yearly and termly curriculum planning in order to make sure all students have an equal learning experience.

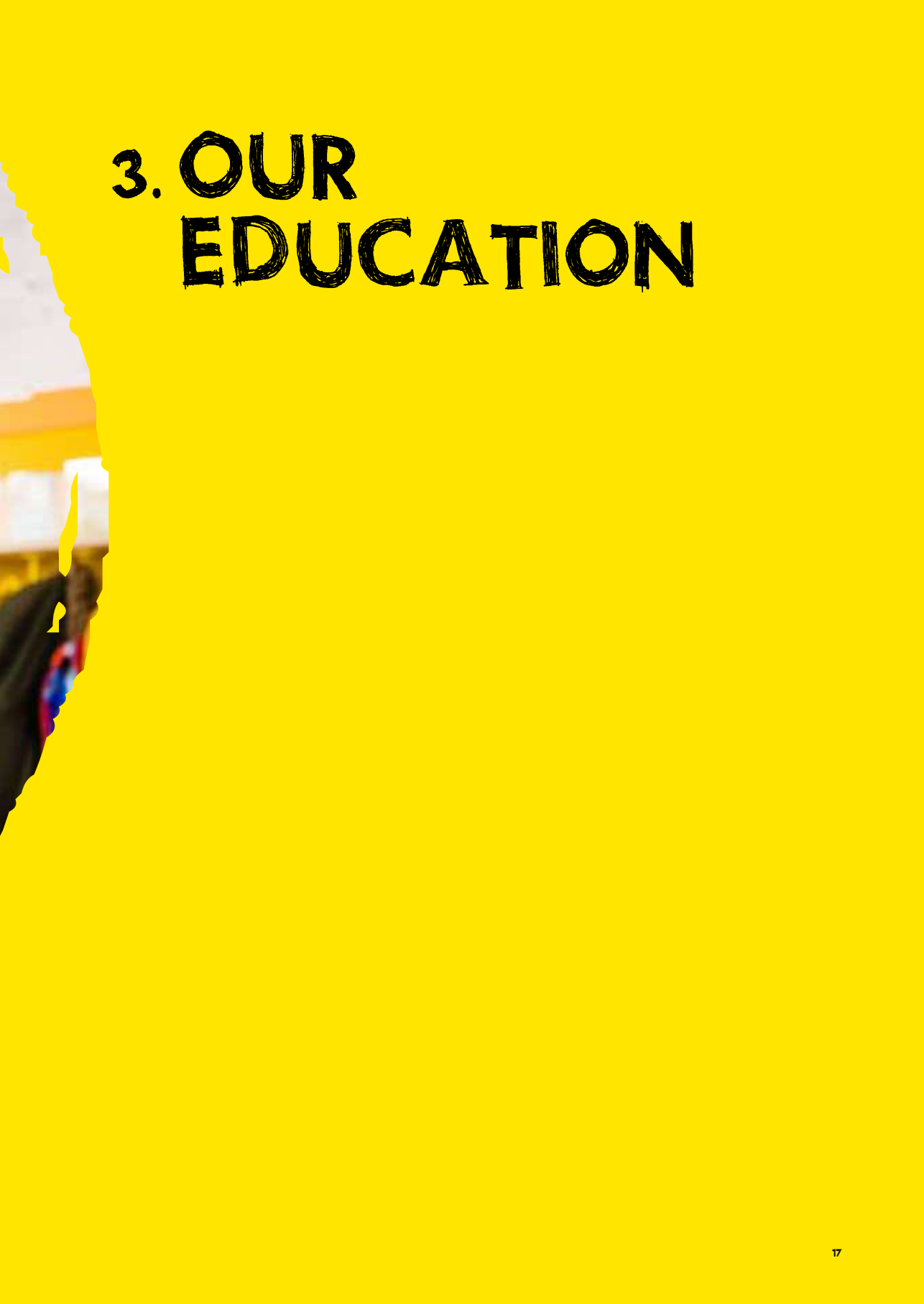
There are several educational support and/or specialist staff members, such as: the Learning Leader and Teaching Assistants, Multilingual Language Learning (MLL) support, including English as Additional Language (EAL) and Dutch as an Additional Language (DAL), and a Physical education teacher. We also work together with other professionals in education and specialists, internally and externally (see '[Our mission, vision and context](#)').

Teaching Assistants help support the teaching and learning in different classes, so that the classroom teacher may differentiate to meet the needs of all students and make optimal use of a multi learning-style approach during lessons. Teaching Assistants also provide specialist individual or small group support as part of our inclusion programme. They are assigned to specific mileposts, so that they know all children well.

Since the designated classroom teachers are responsible for their own class, teachers are involved in all activities, assessments and progress monitored (in individual action plans) for each of the students that the specialist staff members teach.



# 3. OUR EDUCATION



### 3.1 EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Our educational goals and aims of continuous improvement are described in our school plan and educational development plans. Each year our goals and results are analyzed in our school self evaluation.

We offer the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) as our starting framework. The IPC goals cover knowledge, skills and understanding. There are three main types of IPC learning goals: subject, personal and international goals. Numeracy and literacy are critical elements of learning in the primary years, which is why we use the National Curriculum (NC) 2014 (UK) for language and mathematics. These learning objectives can be found in our Parents Guide New National Curriculum. Whenever possible we relate the National Curriculum themes and learning goals to our IPC-units. We work with yearly and termly curriculum plans to make sure all objectives are covered. See for more information the chapter [Our curriculum](#).

### 3.2 DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET

We work with the concept of developing a growth mindset. Growth mindset is the idea that, with effort, it is possible to increase talents and abilities. Students who demonstrate a growth mindset believe that their abilities develop overtime, tend to seek out opportunities to gain new knowledge and broaden their skills, and do not typically shy away from challenges (Kazakoff and Mitchell, 2017). This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. We achieve this by:

- ★ Conducting activities that give students the chance to practice phrases that promote growth mindset
- ★ Making students' progress visible, through our Learning Journey, for example by distinguishing stages in learning, (beginning, developing and mastering) and working with rubrics and success criteria
- ★ Displaying visible reminders of growth-mindset vocabulary, for example by using inspirational posters
- ★ When giving feedback to students, using prompts that facilitate a growth mindset
- ★ Modeling growth mindset as an educator

### 3.3 INQUIRY BASED AND DEEP LEVEL LEARNING

Inquiry based learning is realized by a thematic approach that integrates different concepts such as literacy, numeracy, science and art into meaningful contexts. Inquiry based learning is a method that involves higher order questions and encourages curiosity, which not only helps students to understand the skills gained by following the International Primary Curriculum but also drives the development of conceptual understanding. Deep level learning is also based on working with themes, providing activities and assignments that focus on developing higher order thinking, such as evaluating, analysing, and creating. This approach helps students develop a growth mindset. Students choose how they demonstrate their learning in a varied manner, such as group work, art activities, role play, multimedia, projects and much more.

### 3.4 WORLD CITIZENSHIP

We are committed to develop students who are globally competent, future ready, socially conscious and motivated to positively contribute locally and globally. World citizenship is integrated in the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) we use and our scheme for Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE), Jigsaw.

Our aims are that our learners gain knowledge of global issues and how identities affect perspectives. They will also know about the Sustainable Development Goals and the organisations involved in global affairs. Students know that there are universal rights for all children but for many children these rights are not met. Students also understand their own wants and needs and can compare these with children in different communities. Additionally students are able to empathize with people whose lives are different to their own and know their rights and responsibilities as a citizen of their host country. Finally students have an understanding of the complexity of global and local challenges through making personal connections and developing empathy for individuals affected by a range of situations.

### 3.5 COMMUNICATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Communicative skills are important to illustrate our abilities, interests and opinions and are an integral part of our curricula. Students discuss their skills, knowledge and understanding. They ask questions and give feedback to inspire, share and support each other.

### 3.6 LESSON STRUCTURE

The opening of the lesson is intended to engage students' attention and activate prior knowledge. It is related to the IPC-unit. The lessons start with sharing a clear goal with the students (what the students need to understand and what they must be able to do by the end of the lesson). We make this explicit by clarifying what success entails, for example with rubrics. The instruction consists of showing and telling which involves modelling both the visible actions and the underlying thinking by using the think-aloud strategy. The final part of teaching is practice, starting with some guided practice, followed by independent practice, which helps students to improve their fluency and retain what they have learned. Checking understanding and giving effective feedback is important throughout the lesson.

Activities to support (extended) learning may be carried out individually or in small groups, depending on the educational needs of the students or the activities being carried out. The lessons usually finish with a plenary where the students and teacher review the learning that has taken place or to look ahead to the next learning goal.

A predictable and clear lesson structure creates a positive task-oriented working atmosphere, which allows the students to increase in self-confidence and independence. By using a visual timetable we provide structure and familiarity. By using a 'Time-Timer', combined with a traffic light, we make clear to students how much time they have to complete a task, whether they should be working together or independently, and which noise level is acceptable at each stage of the lesson.

### 3.7 HOME LEARNING

We initiate school-to-home and home-to-school communication about learning activities. We do this to:

- ★ Engage parents in their children's learning
- ★ Help inform parents about the learning happening in class
- ★ Offer further stimulation and enthusiasm for school and learning

Besides this we acknowledge that some students have skills which could be improved by practising these skills at home. We call this home learning.

- ★ Home learning encourages opportunities to rehearse specific key skills such as learning the times tables
- ★ Home learning helps foster good organisational habits which is good preparation for the demands of secondary education (especially for Groups 6 and 7)

Home learning can be any work or activity which a student is asked to do at home (either on their own or with parents). This can be work or an activity to be done by the whole class which reflects former learning in class. It can also be an individual activity based on the specific needs of a student.

Home learning should be enjoyable and manageable for all concerned whilst recognising that students should have plenty of free time after school in which to enjoy their childhood. As the students progress through the school, home learning time increases and more is expected of the children.

If a student is absent due to illness, we will not send home learning home as we would assume that the student was too ill to work. If a student is absent for a length of time, the teacher and parents will agree what should be done, how it should be marked and what sort of support will need to be given. If parents have any problems or questions about the home learning, they should in the first instance contact the student's class teacher.

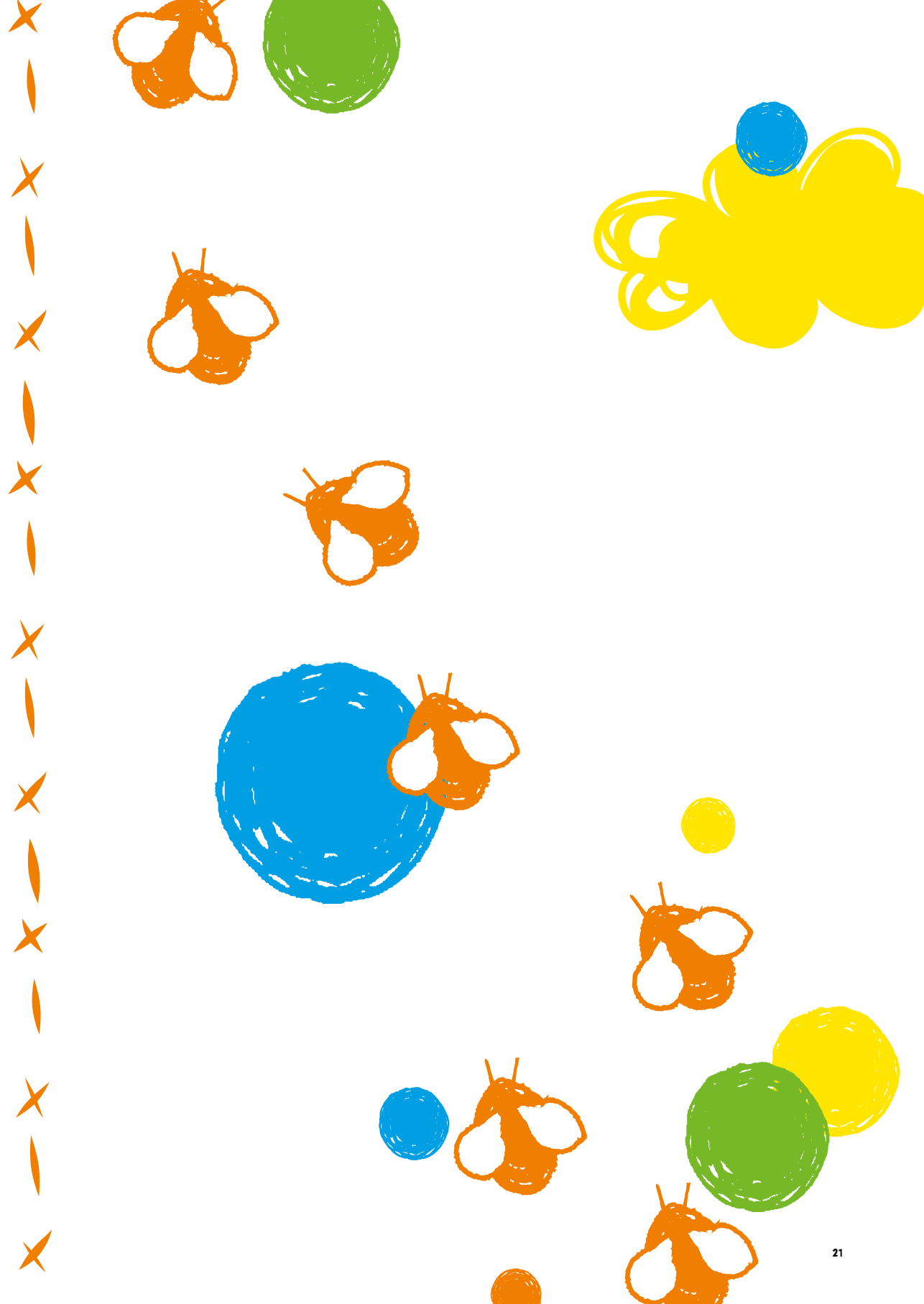
We also have summarised advice for parents for supporting their child at home, for example questions to ask your child while reading or links to educational websites.

**IN OUR GUIDE FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP WE DESCRIBE OUR PROVISION AND ADVICE REGARDING HOME LEARNING.**

### 3.8 QUALITY CONTROL

Optimist International School is constantly improving and adjusting the educational programme. To determine and improve the quality of our education we:

- ★ Work with quality tools. With questionnaires, quick scans, school diagnosis and analysis of standardized assessments we evaluate and analyse different aspects of our education. This enables us to determine the areas of improvement
- ★ Determine the levels of satisfaction by asking parents, staff, and students if they are satisfied with the education we offer and/or our school policy once a year through questionnaires of Scholen met Succes
- ★ Arrange announced and unannounced visits by the Management Team. This gives insight into the education provided in each class. The impressions of these visits will be brought to the Management Team meetings to discuss the quality of our education.







## 4. OUR CURRICULUM

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is our main framework. Since numeracy and literacy are critical elements of learning in the primary years, we also deliver these as individual subjects within the daily time table. Numeracy and literacy are taken from the National Curriculum 2014 (UK). Whenever possible we relate this to the IPC-units.

#### 4.1 **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (GROUP 1)**

The activities in the reception class (Group 1) are based upon the IPC Early Years Programme (IEYC) and the UK Early Learning Goals for communication, language and mathematics. The IPC learning goals are divided into the following strands: independence and interdependence, communication, exploring and healthy living.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage students develop quickly and we recognise that all students are special and unique. We support learning that is both enjoyable and challenging and develop children's ownership in their learning, autonomy and independence through team teaching. We create rich learning environments that consider the needs, interests and developmental stages of each student. We provide a stimulating, fun environment where play and continuous learning forms a basis for learning with a balance between child-initiated play and teachable moments. Learning takes place through activities, songs, rhymes, discussions, books and games. The students also work together in small groups through a range of learning activities. Much emphasis is placed on playing together and developing social skills and independence.

There are specific times for phonics sessions, mathematics and literacy, including shared reading and writing. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is the precursor to the Primary Curriculum (Groups 2-7).

**ALL SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE EARLY YEARS  
FOUNDATION STAGE CAN BE FOUND IN OUR  
PARENTS GUIDE NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM.**

#### 4.2 **IPC (GROUPS 2 - 7)**

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is an enquiry led curriculum providing an interdisciplinary, theme based structure. The IPC has been designed for students of all abilities and all learning styles, and encourages learning in groups as well as individual learning.

The goal of the IPC is for students to focus on a combination of academic, personal and international learning. We want students to enjoy their learning, develop enquiring minds, develop their personal qualities, develop a sense of their own nationality and culture, and, at the same time, develop a profound respect for the nationalities and cultures of others.

No one can predict the nature of work and life opportunities that will be available for today's primary age children by the time they are adults. Many of the jobs they will have don't yet exist, especially in the fields of ICT, technology and science. So, the IPC focuses on a skills-based approach, developing adaptable and resilient globally-minded learners, prepared for the fast-changing world that they will be living and working in.

The subjects of history, geography, science, technology, art, handicraft, ICT, music, society, physical education and international mindedness, are all taught through the IPC curriculum. Linking subjects means that students can make lots of connections with their learning. The development of skills is a very big part of the IPC and learning activities have been designed so that students can develop these skills.

This development of skills even applies to the personal learning goals which emphasise adaptability, resilience, thoughtfulness, cooperation and respect and which, because of progressive skill development, help students to become able and inspired learners.

IPC is divided into four age ranges:

- ★ Early Years (Group 1)
- ★ Milepost 1 (Groups 2 and 3)
- ★ Milepost 2 (Groups 4 and 5)
- ★ Milepost 3 (Groups 6 and 7)

IPC offers between 20 and 30 topics to choose from at each milepost. The units are a mix of investigation, enquiry and practical activities. Each unit of work lasts on average between four and eight weeks, and students learn many of their subjects through this one common theme so that their learning has meaning to them.

The class teacher constantly reviews the learning of the students through observation and assessments for each objective. This ensures that students will not be held back in their learning and will be challenged if the learning of certain objectives has already taken place. This also ensures that students who have missed previous objectives will gain access to the learning support that is needed to remedy the situation.

The IPC focuses students' learning on a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding. Students will learn proven facts (knowledge) and discover strategies for how to do things (skills). We use words like 'are able to' and 'know how to' to support students in developing the skills they need to gain knowledge and understanding. This takes time and practise (often in small steps). Students develop understanding once they have gained the knowledge, have practised the skills needed, and when they have been given the time to think.

Parents can help their child to develop this understanding by asking suitable questions when a child shares what they are learning at school, for example 'Tell me what you know about that' or 'Show me how you do that'. At the start of each unit parents will receive a letter introducing them to the unit. Students will bring leveled topic assignments or activities home, which allow parents to be involved. We encourage parents to explore the theme/subject in their mother tongue. During some units parents are invited to take part in an activity or excursion (for example during the exit point, a celebration of the students' learning at the end of the unit).

The IPC is not just topic learning. Although the learning is based around a theme, the learning that the students do within that theme has very distinct outcomes to ensure that students are learning exactly what they need to learn. In our assessments, there are three developmental stages from 'beginning' to 'developing' and 'mastering'. Success criteria (or 'rubrics') help us to identify the learning stage of each skill in each subject at each age level. Similar success criteria for students, help them to take an active role in the assessment of their own learning. Within a milepost it might take two years or longer to develop from 'beginning' to 'developing' or 'mastering'.

### 4.3 LANGUAGE AND LITERACY (GROUPS 1 - 7)

We acknowledge that language is vital in the sense that it enables students to be able to interact and communicate and ensures a student's success in all areas. Therefore we place great value on the development of language. Language and literary skills are taught using resources and activities based on the British National Curriculum English Framework. Students will learn and gain appreciation of the effective use of language as a valuable life skill. From group 1 - 7 emphasis is placed on:

- ★ Spoken language
- ★ Reading
- ★ Writing
- ★ Spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar

The development of good phonetic skills is crucial in enabling students to access texts and become able and confident readers and writers. We follow a phonics programme in groups 1 and 2 and a spelling programme in groups 3-7, both teaching students the letter sounds, how to blend, read and spell independently.

Reading is taught through a synthetic phonics, whole word and sentence level approach, offered in separate high-quality guided reading activities,

levelled reading and reading for pleasure at school and at home. At Optimist International School we have various genres of books (fiction, non-fiction, fully decodable, non-decodable, poetry, playscripts, classics and traditional tales). Our reading scheme caters for a variety of reading levels and encourages and supports students to read and develop their reading skills. By the end of their primary school education students will have been introduced to a wide range of literature.

In our library, we introduce students to library procedures and help them to appreciate this resource, as well as expose them to students' literature.

Language development is also an integral part of IPC units. Students have specific language lessons on a daily basis.

For students who started at our school with little or no knowledge of the English language we also offer extra English as an Additional Language (EAL) support ([see EAL support](#)).

**ALL SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF LANGUAGE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM CAN BE FOUND IN OUR PARENTS GUIDE NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM.**

#### 4.4 MATHEMATICS (GROUPS 1 - 7)

For our teaching of mathematics, we follow the British National Curriculum Numeracy Framework. With a specific mathematics programme from Group 1 – 7, we focus on understanding and secure foundation in mathematics to develop:

- ★ Number concepts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, algebra, decimals)
- ★ Numerical fluency
- ★ Shapes and measures (angles, geometry, time)
- ★ Data handling (graphs, charts, data analysis)
- ★ Problem-solving skills
- ★ Mathematical confidence

Students are expected to learn addition and subtraction bonds and multiplication tables with

emphasis on mental calculations. We ensure students are fluent in mathematical procedures and number facts by rehearsing these in systematic ways. During the year the concepts of measurement, shapes, fractions, time, money and number operations are taught. We support a secure understanding of mathematical concepts by developing consistent models and using practical equipment.

Besides the importance of students being able to work quickly with numbers, it is important that students can investigate and test ideas, solve problems and apply the concepts they have learnt, especially in everyday situations or in IPC-units. Numeracy development is also an integrated part of the IPC-units.

Assessment is on-going and evaluates what the students know and what thought processes they use. This helps us to determine the next learning step.

Mathematics lessons consist of mental mathematics activities, whole-class teaching and differentiated group teaching. This includes students for whom English is an additional language (EAL), those who require learning support (LS) and those who are working at a higher ability level. Students who master a concept easily are expected to deepen their understanding, for example by applying it to solve problems embedded in more complex contexts. Students who do not master an objective with the rest of the class are supported to enable them to master the concept, for example through same-day intervention.

**ALL SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF MATHEMATICS OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM CAN BE FOUND IN OUR PARENTS GUIDE NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM.**



## 4.5 ENGLISH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is taught to all students who do not have English as a mother tongue and whose command of the English language is not sufficient for them to access the curriculum with ease. Students typically take between 5-7 years of English-speaking education to acquire academically –fluent English, depending on frequency and quality of education.

An EAL student is generally considered to be one who:

- ★ Is learning English as a second or additional language, so who is multilingual
- ★ Is not as proficient in English as a student of the same age who has been learning only English
- ★ Exhibits English language structures and features that are typical of those in the process of learning English
- ★ Needs assistance in classroom activities because of their stage of English language development
- ★ May exhibit EAL features in their production and understanding of oral and written English for a long time

Our EAL specialist is responsible for the quality of the EAL provision by devising and teaching programmes to enhance the provision of EAL students within the school. Additionally, the EAL coordinator supports teachers to operate at their best effectiveness in the delivery of the curriculum for EAL students so that they can achieve their full potential. We support students to:

- ★ Achieve continual progress in the acquisition of English
- ★ Recognize and understand their own bi/multilingualism and gain confidence in pursuing all their languages for learning (we encourage parents to actively pursue the development of the home language or their mother tongue)
- ★ Understand strategies they can use for their linguistic, cognitive and academic development

We have a systematic and holistic approach. First, we consider it very important to be welcoming. Our school ethos and classroom environment are vital in giving newly arrived EAL students the time and space

to settle in and adapt to their new surroundings. We create supportive surroundings. Besides that, we have a more extended intake session and provide students with a longer period to get acquainted with the classroom in case students don't speak English at all. When possible, we try to find a buddy for the student who has the same mother tongue.

At Optimist International School we provide support in a variety of settings. We consider it important to allow EAL students to engage collaboratively in group work within their own class (inclusive practice). Successful collaborative group work empowers each student to develop their language, thinking, self-concept and relationships. Collaborative group work helps EAL students to learn skills that will enhance their learning and motivation in the future; and help other members of the class to adapt their expectations and friendship preferences to include these children.

Support can consist of a mixture of withdrawn lessons and in-class support during or after school hours, provided by the teacher or EAL Teaching Assistant. The EAL Teaching Assistant may plan and adapt the material to more specifically meet the needs of the individual/small group.

Students in Group 1 and 2 learn through play and EAL is incorporated during the whole day as much as possible.

Important conditions we provide:

- ★ A good curriculum which is delivered thoughtfully to meet the educational needs of each child
- ★ Additional support during play time where needed through a pro-active approach
- ★ An understanding of the basic principles of EAL of our staff and ongoing professionalisation
- ★ Activities and support by the teachers to stimulate the interaction between the students

For each EAL student the teacher makes a suitable Individual Education Plan (IEP) to develop specific language skills with support of the Learning Leader. The aim of the support is that a student can access the content of the curriculum whilst developing their language skills. The class teacher and the

Learning Leader discuss the results of all criteria assessments and evaluate the plans and progress.

In an Individual Education Plan we include a developmental trajectory for language acquisition:

- ★ Academic vocabulary for maths, language and science
- ★ General vocabulary
- ★ Progression in language structures needed to acquire and manipulate learning which provides sentences being taught based on the various language functions
- ★ Phonics basics with a systematic phonics programme

**DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE SETTINGS, THE OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN OUR POLICY EAL AND DAL.**

## 4.6 DUTCH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (DAL)

The teaching of our host country's language is an important part of the Optimist International School. The aim is to teach the Dutch language to the students in our international community and increase the knowledge and skills of our Dutch speaking students.

In Groups 1-3 Dutch lessons include every day vocabulary and are animated by songs, rhymes, stories, films and games. Dutch lessons are designed to encourage students to progress from 'New to Dutch' to 'Early acquisition' and 'Becoming familiar with the language'. In Groups 4-7 Dutch courses are designed to encourage and enable our students to progress from the beginning levels of comprehension, to becoming competent and more fluent and being able to communicate more freely within their host community.

In collaboration with the Dutch team of Haarlemmermeer Lyceum - a secondary bilingual school in Hoofddorp - we have a team of Dutch as Additional Language (NT2) specialists. We offer a continuous progress programme for the beginner, through to the advanced level student, with differentiation depending on their ability and needs.

As the students progress, they acquire not only a facility in oral expression but also basic proficiency in reading and writing Dutch. Therefore additional hours are given to Milepost 3 students during and after school hours. This enables a smooth transition from our school to the bilingual programme at Haarlemmermeer Lyceum.

The school makes use of the host country's resources, cultural and environmental points of interest. The school library houses a collection of Dutch books. Students are strongly encouraged to interact with the Dutch community, to foster an international understanding and to practice their Dutch. The European Framework of Reference for Languages is used to benchmark students' progress in Dutch.

The decision as to whether a new arrival should follow Dutch courses immediately should be based on the following language profile:

- ★ Dutch speakers should always be included in Dutch classes
- ★ Students new to English and Dutch should be included in Dutch classes as a general rule, but with a clear process to change that decision according to the following:
  - Students who arrive with no English or Dutch and are known to be staying at the school on a short-term basis (for two years or less) should be exempted from Dutch in favour of more EAL. For these students, giving them the chance to develop their English as much as possible is the priority.
  - If a student is likely to be in the Netherlands long-term, every effort should be made to have them continue with Dutch, or be integrated back into a Dutch class as soon as possible
  - Student well-being: if a student is showing distress in the Dutch lessons, further investigation should be done
  - Inclusion/exemption for students with special educational needs should be made along the same lines as above

**DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE SETTINGS, THE OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN OUR POLICY EAL AND DAL.**

## 4.7 SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM

The IPC goals and daily circle time are an important part of our social and emotional curriculum.

During circle time students sit together with the teacher in a circle (usually on a carpet or mat on the floor) and reflect on different issues either moral, social or emotional, taken from Jigsaw PSHE / Health and Well-being. Also behaviour aspects related to these subjects are discussed. Teachers relate as much as possible to situations that are relevant to the students or have happened recently. Students learn to listen to each other and respect other's points of view. This is also important to bond as a group, which is a continuous process with new students coming in and students leaving throughout the year.

The IPC includes a student's personal development as key to the primary school experience. The personal goals are abilities and characteristics that students will need to equip them for an ever-changing world. The personal goals embody the skills that we want to develop in our students. The values can be seen all round the school and the students use them for self evaluation of an activity or piece of work. These personal goals are:



I can ask questions /  
I can find out when where what why how



I can try new things



I can try again / I never give up



I can work together / I can take turns /  
I can share / I help



I can listen / I can say/show...



I am caring / I can agree and disagree /  
I can look after my things / I can tidy up



I can celebrate / I think before I do



I make the right choice

## 4.8 HANDWRITING

Handwriting is a core skill, which is best taught through demonstration, explanation and practice. It is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum.

## 4.9 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used across the school to complement, reinforce and support the IPC. Students are provided with the opportunity to develop and apply technology capabilities in ICT. They are taught to use a range of ICT equipment and software confidently and purposefully to communicate and handle information, for example for preparing presentations or to do research on the internet.

The use of smart boards in all classrooms opens up many possibilities to the way our teachers offer education. Resources and materials are supported more visually and actively engage students, maintaining their focus.

We have many Chromebooks available and with a variety of computer learning programmes and interactive software, students are exposed to technology. When necessary, each classroom can access Chromebooks for all students for whole class activities. We work in a Google environment whereas tasks can be assigned through Google Classroom.

Within the IPC, we also provide lessons on media literacy; dealing with the new digital world, including the Internet and social media channels such as Facebook and Whats App. We look at issues such as 'How do we behave towards each other over social media?', 'What is desirable?', 'How can we determine the reliability of the information we find Online?' and 'How do we find information that we can we trust and how do we process it?'

#### 4.10 ART, MUSIC AND CULTURE

To enhance the activities of the IPC, we ensure that the students actively participate in various activities, allowing them to absorb and reflect on various cultural disciplines such as music, drama, media, dance, heritage and literature. As an additional support to the cultural education they receive at school, we work closely with Pier-K, the Centre for Art and Culture in Hoofddorp, by taking part in workshops. Our cultural coordinators oversee the organisation of these activities. We refer to this as of our 'Cultural Menu'.

We have specialist music events for musical education which aims to support students in developing their motor skills, rhythm, melody, and social skills. A focus is put on singing, learning to use rhythmical instruments, listening to music, and moving to the music. During these classes students are provided with collaborative opportunities in a supportive environment. Students actively participate and are free to explore their own creativity and talents.

#### 4.11 PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS TOURNAMENTS

Besides our physical education programme, we encourage children to move and be physically active during the day. We ensure that every student can excel in one activity or another and that every student is encouraged to explore which sport suits them best. For our Physical Education (PE) lessons, Optimist International School aims for children to develop:

- ★ Various motor skills in different movement types
- ★ Active participation and enjoyment in the sessions
- ★ Creativity and ingenuity in movement types
- ★ Correct handling of material
- ★ Hygienic standards
- ★ Healthy and active behaviour

Students are given PE lessons twice a week by specialist PE teachers. During these lessons the development and progress of students is monitored by the PE teacher(s). Students of groups 3 -4 take part in swimming lessons provided by Sportcomplex Koning Willem Alexander. In addition we run a '**school ground to play ground initiative**' during break times where students are exposed to a wide range of outdoor activities.

In specific circumstances PE teachers might advise motoric remedial teaching or physiotherapy and discuss options with parents. When parents have questions regarding the physical development of their child, they are invited to make an appointment with the PE teacher.

We have an annual sports day. This event takes place on one of the playing fields nearby and is organised by our PE teacher. Students take part in various sports activities and games during the day.

The PE teacher also organizes specific lessons provided by Sportservice Haarlemmermeer at our school during the regular PE lessons, for example tennis or judo. We also participate in local sports tournaments, such as athletics, baseball, basketball, soccer and hockey. We usually participate with mixed groups (with students of OBS de Optimist).

Our PE teacher organises these tournaments and usually parents are present as coaches. These tournaments take place after school time or during the weekends and holidays.

Healthy eating for students is important. We encourage students to maintain a healthy weight and to avoid chronic diseases such as diabetes. Healthy eating is often combined with physical activity. Healthy eating is influenced by the physical and social environments of children. The school environment is a key setting for addressing healthy eating, because students spend a large part of their day in school. Also, healthy eating in combination with physical activity promotes learning. Healthy behaviour is part of our education within the IPC. We consider ourselves as role models and stimulate healthy food choices for snacks and lunch. We provide regular water breaks throughout the school day.

We work with Sportservices Haarlemmermeer in providing us with sports and activities during lunch times daily.

## 4.12 SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

### LANGUAGE FRIENDLY SCHOOL

We are an accredited Language Friendly School, which means that we make sure all languages are visible in school and ensure that they are all equally valued. We include home languages in our learning, a key factor for inclusion and quality learning, and it also helps to avoid knowledge gaps and increases the speed of learning and comprehension. It can boost learners' confidence and self-esteem. We include parents in language activities.

## EXTRA (CURRICULAR) ACTIVITIES

To support the IPC, we organize small excursions for each class that match the unit(s) the students are working on, for example outdoor education activities such as visits to gardens (Keukenhof), farms, the coastline and/or woodland nature walks. These trips are organized during school hours, under the supervision of teachers. Parents are welcome to join us to help supervise the students.

There are times in the school year that the students engage in special activities that enrich our curriculum. Some of these are special events in Hoofddorp or other regions of the Netherlands, for example a four days walk in Floriande (local area), Children's Book Week (Kinderboekenweek), and visits to local musea as part of our cultural education programme. We also include Dutch cultural activities in our Dutch lessons.

## TRY OUT DIFFERENT SPORTS IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Noord Holland Actief is the sports platform of Haarlemmermeer. Here you will find different sports that are offered to you and your children in and around Hoofddorp. This platform offers you a chance to try out several activities or sports. You can practice different sports. Have a look online for more details and click on the button 'aanbod' to see what is available via <https://www.noordhollandactief.nl/>





# 5. FAMILY- SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP, COMMUNICATION

Parental engagement recognizes the important role both parents and teachers play in developing positive attitudes towards learning and education for children, building their motivation and confidence as learners, and fostering their enjoyment of learning.

Our aim is to:

- ★ Encourage parents to participate in their child's education and in the life of the school
- ★ Ensure that parents feel welcome in our school and are encouraged to work alongside us
- ★ Provide opportunities to enrich the learning experience of the child, bringing together the resources of home and school

## 5.1 COMMUNICATION

We organise open mornings so children can share their work/classroom with their parent(s), for example show work that is on display on our working-walls. By asking their child questions during this time, parents can get an insight in the learning that is happening in the classroom. It is our experience that during these moments parents will get more specific answers from their child than when they would ask questions when arriving home at the end of a school day.

When parents bring or collect their child, teachers provide specific attention to the class or students. During these moments only small practical things can be shared between the parent(s) and the teacher.

If parents have any questions or concerns regarding the development of their child, we ask them to make an appointment to discuss this with the teacher, so that we can take the time to do this properly and talk with you personally. The teacher is always the main and first contact for parents. We will do our best to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. In case parents or a teacher are not able to work things out together, an appointment can be made with a member of the Management Team.

Our main mode of communication is via our school app 'Parro', for example teacher notifications, newsletters, activity information, absences.

Parents can contact us via email to make an appointment if they wish. We don't communicate regarding concerns or the development of a student through email. This must be done in person to avoid misunderstandings.

We provide children with a school book bag to transport library books and other resources.

We plan three individual parent-teacher learning conferences per year, in September, January and June. When advice or help from other specialists is desired, for example our Learning Leader, school coach or local health specialist, the teacher can realize that. During these meetings the progress of students will be discussed. By the end of the year a written student progress report will be provided by the teacher. Parents have access throughout the year to Learning Ladders parents portal, so they are able to monitor their child's progress.

During the year around the end of each term we plan Learning Celebrations, led by students, during which they share their learning experiences with parents. The students make their own learning visible by showing materials or activities of their choice.

In the beginning of the year, we organise a general parents session where we explain our school programmes and the class teachers share the programme for their class. This session also provides parents to meet their child's teacher in person and for them to welcome you to our school. During the year we organise a parent meeting for all parents, generally with a specific topic. Besides this, we organise an information evening about secondary education and the Dutch education system after primary school.

Practical information about the current academic year, with our school calendar, including school activities, study days, holidays, meetings and performances can be found on our website .

In addition to this, we provide Newsletters (by email), to inform parents about learning in the different classrooms. We also have a school Facebook page [www.facebook.com/Optimist.International.School](https://www.facebook.com/Optimist.International.School) and an Instagram account: [https://www.instagram.com/optimist\\_international\\_school](https://www.instagram.com/optimist_international_school)

OIS gives a high priority to communication, openness and transparency towards parents which is why we encourage parents to express any concerns or dissatisfaction to the teacher directly. If it concerns something that happened in the class or to the school management if it concerns something which transcends the classroom setting.

It is our school policy not to share or distribute (email) addresses or phone numbers of parents to other parents.

All classes have a 'class parent' who usually sets up a Whats App group in which parents share contact details if they wish.

The class WhatsApp traffic is intended for announcements about practical matters, appointments and the provision of information. It is not intended for one-on-one conversations, discussions, disagreements or emotionally charged messages. We explicitly ask parents not to use the app group to express complaints about children/the teacher or to disclose information about their child. This entails insecurity for all those involved and is not in the interest of cooperation around children.

We initiate school-to-home and home-to-school communication about learning activities.

For example we allow for students to bring reading books home, provide parents with a letter introducing them to the learning objectives of an IPC unit, ask students to gather materials for an IPC-unit or have them take learning they accomplished at school, home. We do this to:

- ★ Engage parents in their children's learning
- ★ Help inform parents about the learning happening in class
- ★ Offer further stimulation and enthusiasm for school and learning

Besides this we acknowledge that some students have skills which could be improved by practicing these skills at home. We call this home learning. In the chapter [Our education our home learning](#) policy is explained further.

**MORE INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE FOUND IN OUR GUIDE FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP.**

## 5.2 VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY

We support family and community members in their efforts to support the school and the students. Parental support is highly appreciated at many levels, such as reading activities, library activities, logistic assistance, special activities (such as excursions), parties/social events and specific expertise.

Class representatives are parents who volunteer to assist their child's class teacher with class activities. Class representatives are a welcoming informal network of support and a source of assistance to the class teacher on all sorts of non-educational matters. Assistance can include:

- ★ Organising volunteers for group activities
- ★ Acting as an informal contact for new parents
- ★ Helping organize class displays, activities, etcetera

We welcome parents to use the school facilities (coffee machine, a warm and welcoming space to meet in). The school office and reception are situated on the right, as you enter the main entrance.

## 5.3 PC

The school Participation Council (PC) consists of elected representatives from the parent and staff community. Their contribution and support plays a vital part in school development. The PC has an advisory role and sometimes has to give consent on certain topics, in accordance with participation council regulations. At the moment, the PC consists of three parents and three teachers. The PC is also represented in the GMR (Gemeenschappelijke Medezeggenschaps Raad), which is the overarching PC for all primary schools within our board.

The PC can be contacted through email:

[mr.ois@sopoh.nl](mailto:mr.ois@sopoh.nl).

Information about the PC and minutes of meetings can be found on our [website](#).

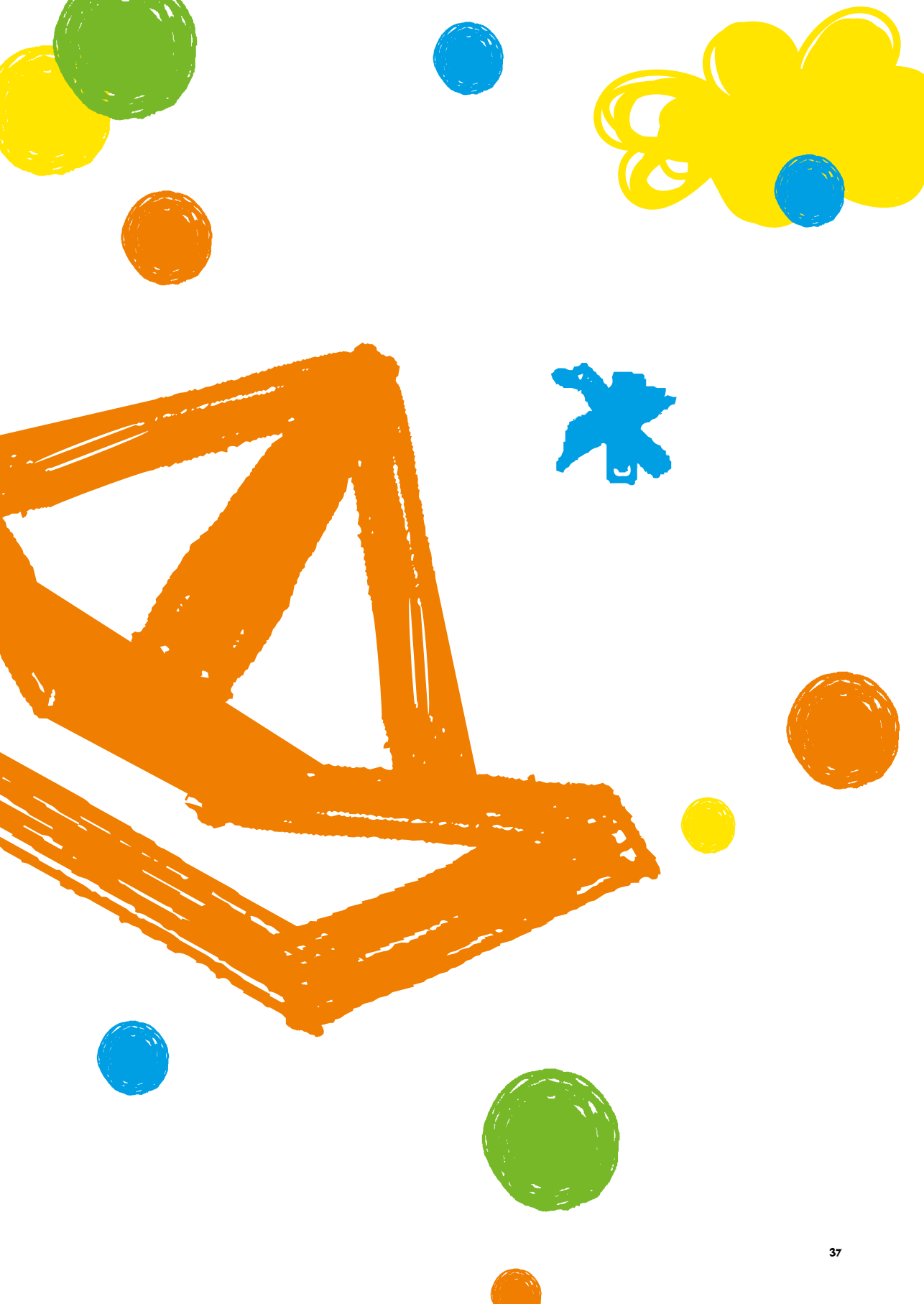
## 5.4 ACTIVITY COMMITTEE

There are several ways in which parents can be actively involved in the school, one of which is to join the 'Activities Committee' (AC). Parental involvement gives a positive signal to students and increases the sense of connection and belonging. The AC is very important to Optimist International School and we greatly value its support.


For example, the AC organises the celebrations of festivals such as Sinterklaas, Christmas or sports day. The AC supports and coordinates the organisation of all the school's festivities by setting up small working groups. Teachers, class representatives and the AC often work closely together.

One-off volunteering parental support is highly appreciated at many levels, such as reading activities, library activities, logistic assistance, special activities (such as excursions), parties/social events and specific expertise.

Specifically we welcome parents to help within our school library or to welcome new parents in a welcoming committee.







## 6. STUDENT MONITORING, STUDENT SUPPORT AND TRANSITION

Student support means that we adapt our teaching to meet the needs and abilities of each student. First of all, it's crucial that teachers know their students well. We monitor the students from their first days at school in terms of both academic performance and personal development. This is done by systematically observing and recording the progress of students. We do not only monitor academic performance, but also motivation and attitude to work, learning styles, motoric skills and social-emotional development. Therefore, student support is not only aimed at students with learning difficulties but also at the more able students, students who can handle more than the regular curriculum.

Student support begins within the classroom itself, led by teachers and the Teaching Assistants. Our aim is to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our students by tailoring our teaching around each individual student needs. We also have a School counsellor who is there to provide internal support by having regular consultation with the teacher and by doing observations in the classroom.. The School counsellor can also assist with organising external support. More on this in the next chapters.

## 6.1 ORGANISATION OF STUDENT CARE

The support team (the School counsellor and the Teaching Assistants) is the link between teachers/ parents and specialists who provide services within our school. For parents and students, the first point of contact is always the teacher, but the support team is always there to assist when needed and sometimes attend parent-teacher meetings.

The class teacher may indicate which students should be considered for learning support, in consultation with the School counsellor.

During a consultation with the class teacher and the

School counsellor, the class teacher states which learning strategies have been employed in class to support the student. Depending on the nature of the concern the class teacher runs an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for six - eight weeks. The IEP is evaluated and adapted if necessary. This is discussed with the parents.

The Teaching Assistant periodically provides the class teacher with updates regarding the student's progress, and keeps notes each time he/she works with a student. This information is made available to both the class teacher and the School counsellor.

There are limited facilities however and so it is not always possible to fit every student into the care system. We are a mainstream primary school and we have a commitment to provide affordable international education. Teachers have the right knowledge, skills and materials to aid most but not all students.

## 6.2 SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

The School counsellor plans regular group consultations with the teachers (approximately 5 – 6 times per year) to discuss all students. They discuss the educational needs of the students and their progress in the different areas. Possible topics for discussion are:

- ★ Class teacher's concerns or questions related to the teaching or the learning process in a class (organisation, teaching methods and content)
- ★ Test results of the student monitoring system
- ★ Efficiency of the learning support input per class by the Teaching Assistants
- ★ Identification of students with behavioural problems or learning difficulties
- ★ Reason for referral to external support specialists

Besides these regular group consultations, teachers and/or the School counsellor can plan meetings to discuss individual students. Possible topics or actions are, to:

- ★ Carry out further testing by the Learning Support Teacher or external specialists

- ★ Provide extra help in class
- ★ Establish or adjust an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- ★ Arrange appointments with parents
- ★ Contact external agencies/specialists (school doctor, health care experts, social worker, speech therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, child coaches, educational psychologists and counselling)

### 6.3 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

All children learn in different ways and at different rates. Sometimes students need additional support to help them successfully access their learning. Within a classroom situation teachers differentiate and try to meet the educational needs of all students. In case there is an inquiry regarding a student's needs that falls outside of the basic support, a consultation with the School counsellor is planned. At this consultation, the parents, the School counsellor, and sometimes also the school health department (CJG) will be at the meeting, as well as the teacher. During this consultation, the manner of support required for the student and/or the teacher and/ or the parents will be discussed.

When a student has a diagnosed learning and or educational difficulty the school will try and meet the needs of that child. When the needs of the student are no longer able to be met within the school, an alternative solutions will be recommended and implemented. Because of the so called 'zorgplicht' (duty of care), the school is responsible for providing the appropriate education to all children. This could mean the school will arrange a transferral to an academic establishment that can better accommodate these needs.

All requests for a placement at a school for special education (S(B)O - Speciaal (Basis) Onderwijs) must be addressed through Passend Onderwijs Haarlemmermeer, our collaborative partnership. If they agree on the decision, the student receives a so called 'Toelaatbaarheidsverklaring' (eligibility statement).

### 6.4 MORE ABLE AND EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

Students who can handle more than the standard curriculum are offered enrichment and extension work based upon their needs, abilities and interests. IPC is a curriculum that allows the more able and gifted to perform at a different level, due to it's inquiry-based nature with open ended research task possibilities. IPC allows teachers to enhance the higher order thinking skills of these students, for example by encouraging questioning, having students connect concepts in more complex contexts, having students make inferences with real world examples, having them analyse, discuss, evaluate and encourage creative thinking.

### 6.5 STUDENT MONITORING SYSTEM

Assessment at Optimist International School is an ongoing process of observing, collecting and analysing evidence to decide where the students are in their learning, where they need to go, what the next step is and how they can get there.

For new students we use the initial weeks to start assessments. This allows us to have an accurate starting position and also to be on the same page with the parents. Following this, we can begin to monitor progress and decide upon suitable educational needs. These start assessments also give indication of any possible gaps in learning.

Our School counsellor helps to choose the right level for the start assessment in special situations (when we suspect children are on a different level).

The teachers provide formative assessments on a regular base for all language items, mathematics, IPC and PE. This means that student's work is being monitored and teachers can plan next steps and lessons and differentiate instructions accordingly. Through learning objectives and continuums in our monitoring system, Classroom Monitor, we record student tracking, assessments. We translate this data and create reports.

Alongside this we do standardised testing. This is a way of assessing children within an age group to see if they are making appropriate developmental progress in relation to a majority of children of their age. These tests are independent of the curriculum. This way we can monitor their long term progress. This is also a way for the school to monitor the quality, coverage and balance of our curriculum. Also these standardised assessments are monitored in Classroom Monitor.

We have fixed periods for the assessments and endeavor to ensure that our approach is not stressful for our students. We engage in standardised assessments for the core subjects, cognitive ability and students' attitudes and mindsets to self and school.

## 6.6 PARENT-TEACHER LEARNING CONFERENCES AND REPORTS

We plan three individual parent-teacher learning conferences per year, September, January and June. During these meetings the progress of students is discussed. By the end of the year a written student progress report will be provided before the third parent-teacher learning conference. If parents have concerns or questions, data and/ or assessments can be discussed with the classroom teacher at any time by making an appointment.

## 6.7 TRANSITION & TRANSITIONING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

At Optimist International School students are supported and encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability. Only in exceptional circumstances, might a student be required to repeat a year. This will be fully discussed with parents, teacher and our School counsellor. Repeating a year should be of personal or academic benefit to the student.

The education received at Optimist International School is designed to prepare students to continue an uninterrupted learning programme by meeting the educational level requirements of the British and the international education systems, regardless of the chosen secondary school.

It is up to the parents to decide what will be the most suitable form of secondary education for their child once he/she has finished Group 7. We work together with international schools nearby and Haarlemmermeer Lyceum, a bilingual secondary school with a programme for non-Dutch speaking children with an international focus.

More information can be found in the document [Secondary education system and advisory procedure Haarlemmermeer Lyceum](#).

For those planning to continue their secondary education in the Netherlands, it may be helpful to know that the Optimist International School cooperates closely with:

### **Haarlemmermeer Lyceum in Hoofddorp**

"A Window to the World" (distance from Optimist International School approx. 1 km) offers a bilingual programme at three different levels: mavo (\*preparatory secondary vocational education), havo (\*senior general secondary education) and vwo (\*university preparatory education). The school has a separate programme for non-Dutch speakers. Students who don't speak Dutch (or just a little), will enroll in a Dutch as a second language programme (NT2). Bilingual education integrates an international focus into the curriculum.

The school offers a combined educational programme of the Dutch national curriculum and an English language and International Orientation programme (CLIL/EIO) which is recognized by the Dutch ministry of Education, Nuffic and IB (International Baccalaureate). Bilingual Students finish the Dutch exam program at the same level as students who do their education solely in Dutch (regular stream). The bilingual students also do an English IB-language exam which is recognised all over the world (CPE-level). In the academic year 2018/2019 the school welcomed 47 international students into their Dutch as a Second Language Programme (NT2). More detailed information can be obtained from the Management Team or [www.haarlemmermeerlyceum.nl](http://www.haarlemmermeerlyceum.nl) or by contacting [e.sartori@haarlemmermeerlyceum.nl](mailto:e.sartori@haarlemmermeerlyceum.nl)

We also work with two international schools in our region:

- ★ **Het Rijnlands Lyceum International School** in Oestgeest (distance from Optimist International School approximately 25km. Het Rijnlands Lyceum International School (ISRLO) offers international education within a Dutch setting aiming to develop inspiring and thoughtful global citizens. The school is set in Oestgeest close to the university city of Leiden and is part of the Foundation “Stichting Het Rijnlands Lyceum”. ISRLO is an IB World School and offers The Middle Years and Diploma Programmes. The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) is designed for 11 – 16 year olds and aims to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to proceed successfully to the IB Diploma programme (DP). The DP Programme is a rigorous 2-year pre-university course. <https://www.isrlo.nl/>

- ★ **The International School of Haarlem (ISH)** in Haarlem (distance from Optimist International School approximately 10 km) introduced and implemented a secondary curriculum for students in September 2018. The programme offered at ISH provides a recognised, international curriculum for secondary students in Haarlem and the surrounding municipalities. Subsequent years will see further developments and growth. The school offers a full International Baccalaureate (IB) programme in the secondary department within its early years of operation. More detailed information can be obtained from the Management Team or [www.internationalschoolhaarlem.nl/secondaryeducation](http://www.internationalschoolhaarlem.nl/secondaryeducation)

If you would like any advice on any other school in The Netherlands or abroad, you can contact the Management Team.

In autumn we organise an evening where we provide parents and students with more information about secondary education and the Dutch school system. We also invite secondary schools during this meeting to give parents/students more information about these specific schools. Secondary schools also organise their own information evenings (usually in January) for interested parents and students.

Naturally, the staff at Optimist International School will offer advice to parents and provide copies of reports, references and any additional information another school may require.

If you are leaving the country and need specific documentation for the new school, please contact the school office. We request that you give the school office and our staff ample time to collect the information needed.



# 7. SCHOOL LIFE



## IN THIS CHAPTER WE DESCRIBE PRACTICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

### 7.1 SCHOOL HOUR ENTRY AND EXIT PROCEDURE

The school is open from 08:00am and lessons end at 2:30pm. During the school day there are two breaks during which students have time to eat (snack or lunch) and to play outside. Our Groups 1 and 2 have extra time to play outside.

At the end of the school day students from the Groups 1 - 4 are only allowed to leave once the teacher has seen the parent who is collecting them. Parents wait outside to collect their child. Parents need to ensure that, if their child has permission to go home alone, this has been discussed with the classroom teacher. If students are to be collected by someone other than their parents, the class teacher needs to be notified. Staff from the afterschool/ morning childcare organisations bring and collect children at an agreed place in our building.

If parents know that they will be unavoidably late for pick up time, they should phone the school office to inform us. Supervision by staff will end 15 minutes after school ends and students must then be supervised by parents. If parents are repeatedly late, an appointment will be made with the Management Team to discuss alternative possibilities for childcare/collection.

We strongly advise all parents who live within a radius of 2 km to come by foot or bicycle.

To guarantee the safety and maintain a good relation with the local community, please respect the following agreements. Do not double-park your car and leave it unattended. Do not park on pavements forcing pedestrians onto the road or block driveways. Do not park on private property. Complaints will be filed by the residents. We advise you to give yourself that little extra time to park safely.

### 7.2 ABSENCE, ILLNESS, LATE

#### ARRIVALS AND LEAVE

The consistent daily attendance of the students is essential to ensure their academic progress. Therefore, students should be absent for important reasons only, such as personal illness, family emergencies, or religious holidays. Where possible, dental or medical appointments should be scheduled out of school hours. It may be that your child cannot attend school because of illness or, due to (medical) appointments, they will be late at school or need to be collected early. It is very important for us to know this.

Please use the Parro app to register absence or by calling school between 7:30 and 8:15 am. Please clearly state the name of your child and their group so that their teacher can be informed of their absence. You can also contact the class teacher by email. If we have not heard from you, and no leave of absence has been granted, then you will be telephoned by the school at roughly 08:45 am to ensure the student's safety.

Students arriving later than 8.15 will be registered in our monitoring system as 'late'. Parents are responsible for the arrival of their children at the correct time. You will be contacted if your child arrives late regularly (3 times or more in a period between two holidays). The class teacher will discuss this with you. In case the situation does not change, we will invite parents to meet with a member of the Management Team. We ask late arrivals (parents and students) to respect the learning that is taking place. Students should enter the classroom without parents, quietly and not interrupt the lessons.

When a student is absent due to illness for more than six consecutive days, the school will contact the parents and enquire how the student's recovery is progressing, what agreements on school work are in place and whether it is known when the student will return to school. This will be repeated after the agreed period of return has expired and the student is still not present.

When a student is ill for longer than 10 consecutive days or more than three times in two months or when there are concerns about the student's health, parents will be invited for a consultation or will be referred to the school doctor.

If we see that a student has had an unauthorised absence or has arrived late or absent on a regular basis, we have to inform the Educational Attendance Officer. Repeated absences will be taken seriously and entered in the student's file. Such absences are likely to have an effect on academic performance and may well be reflected in the student's report.

Compulsory Education assumes that you comply with the standard school holidays. Any extra holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, due to the 'specific nature of the profession' of one of the parents. An employer's statement has to be submitted which shows that no leave is possible within official school holidays. Holiday leave may only be granted once per school year, can be no longer than 10 school days and may not take place in the first two weeks of the school year. Families wishing to take their children out of school during term time must always submit an application to the Management Team at least 8 weeks in advance. If an application is not submitted in sufficient time, a decision before departure cannot be guaranteed. If your request is for important reasons and you were unable to give the required prior notice, you may then inform the Management Team coupled with the reason. The request for leave of absence form can be found on the school [website](#) or is available in our office. This form must be completed and returned to the Management Team, with the exception of medical and dental appointments. In such situations the parents can notify the teacher in advance.

Leave of absence is always granted for four-year-old students, as they have not yet reached the age of compulsory schooling. Please however, notify the class teacher, in advance of the absence.

The Management Team can approve special leave for up to ten school days in extreme circumstances. If you want your child to have additional leave of more than ten days in a school year then you must submit a special request to the truancy officer (leerplichtambtenaar). This is only granted in very exceptional cases.

★ Special leave can be granted on specific family occasions, specified on the leave form to be found on our [website](#).

## 7.3 THE SCHOOL CALENDAR,

### HOLIDAYS

School holidays, days off, activities and all other important days are included in our [School year calendar 2023-2024](#) which can be found on the [school website](#).

During study days the students are free, but the teachers will come to school. These days are planned for team building, individual career planning, English, Numeracy and International Primary Curriculum planning, professional development, etcetera. We will always inform parents as far in advance as possible, but count on your understanding in those cases where professional development opportunities arise without us being able to give you prior warning.

## 7.4 BREAK TIMES, FOOD AND DRINKS

Students have their morning break time at around 10am and their lunch break at 12pm. Food and drink is brought from home. Most students bring a small lunch box with a range of different foods that they like to eat. We encourage students to eat healthy food and to develop healthy social eating habits. We try to model good eating habits and healthy food choices, so ensure that you provide a nutritious lunch. We respectfully request that sweets, gum, party bags, chocolate spread, and carbonated drinks are not sent into school. Some students are allergic to certain ingredients or have dietary restrictions and would rather not be exposed to these foods.

It is helpful if the children have their names on their beakers/drink cartons and lunch boxes. In keeping with our desire to be as environmentally friendly as possible we encourage all students to use reusable beakers and each student receives an Optimist beaker. We also encourage parents to

provide their children with fruit (for their snack and/or lunch). Snacking during lessons is not allowed. We encourage students to drink water in between lessons. We have arranged with all providers of after school care (SKH Hasselbraam, Kindergarden and Happy Kids Floriande that the students will be given a food/drink break when their after-school care begins.

## 7.5 ALLERGIES AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Some of our students suffer from potentially serious allergies or medical conditions. Parents are asked to note any serious medical conditions on the General Application form as part of the enrollment process for their child.

As a basic rule, teachers and staff do not deliver or give students medication, even over-the-counter drugs. If medication is needed, parents are given the opportunity to give their child medicines during the school day. It is the parents responsibility to keep us informed.

**We are a nut-free school.** No nuts please, they can cause choking in young children and several students have severe allergies. If your child is a fussy eater, try to pack a range of different things that might tempt him/her at lunchtime. Please notify the class teacher and school office in writing of any food allergies or special diets for health or religious reasons.

**MORE INFORMATION REGARDING MEDICAL CONDITIONS CAN BE FOUND IN OUR MEDICINES POLICY AS PART OF OUR SAFETY POLICY.**

## 7.6 YOUTH HEALTH CARE &

### SMOKE FREE SCHOOL

We have a good relationship with a school doctor, school nurse and a doctor's assistant. If you have any questions about your child's health, growth, upbringing, eating, sleeping, bed-wetting etc. you can always consult a member of the Youth Health Care team (GGD). The GGD can be reached on weekdays from 08:30am -12:30pm and from 1pm to 5pm. Their telephone number is 023 789 1777 or email [frontofficejgz@vrk.nl](mailto:frontofficejgz@vrk.nl). They facilitate consultations at our school during parent evenings.

At the age of five and again when in Group 7 students are offered a brief health check. You will receive more information about this at the relevant time. The school doctor or the school nurse can also be consulted by the school if, together with the parent(s), we have any concerns about the health or development of one of our students. The school can also discuss a child - anonymously - with Youth Health Care if we need advice on what steps should be taken to provide a child with the correct help or guidance. The names of students who have recently joined us from a different school are passed onto our Youth Health Care team so that they can request access to the child's health records. If you object to this sharing of information please inform the Management Team. For more information about Youth Health Care we refer you to the GGD website: [www.ggdkennerland.nl/jeugd](http://www.ggdkennerland.nl/jeugd).

Our Learning Leader coordinates consultations with specialists of the GGD.

Our school area is smoke-free, that means that we have a smoking ban in and around our school area which is imposed and will be strictly controlled during school hours.

## 7.7 INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND

### HEAD LICE

The relevant guidance provided by Youth Health Care is available at the school. Parents are requested to inform the school if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease. If a contagious disease is detected contact should be made with the Management Team. If necessary, the school will contact Youth Health Care to determine what further action is necessary. The head of school may exclude students who have, or are suspected of having a contagious disease. Parents of the children who belong to the same class as the affected student may be informed if necessary. The school reserves the right to send the student home in case of doubt.

Please check your child's hair regularly. If you find head lice please let your child's teacher know. A case of head lice is easily treated and there should be no cause for alarm. Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Successful treatment should kill crawling lice.

**MORE INFORMATION REGARDING TREATMENT OF HEAD LICE IS AVAILABLE AT OUR OFFICE.**

## 7.8 EMERGENCY CLOSING

The head of school, or his/her appointed replacement, is authorised to announce the closing of the school if an actual or potential hazard threatens the safety and well-being of students and employees. The decision to close the school shall be made upon consultation, if possible, with members of the school board, teaching staff, and/or other agencies responsible for the safety and well-being of the community. Contact will be made via Parro to inform parents of any closures or emergencies.

## 7.9 TEACHER ABSENCE AND COVER

Under Dutch labour regulations, a staff member may request (a) day(s) of leave for a specific reason. Teachers can also be absent because of illness. If a teacher is ill or absent we always try to arrange cover for his/her group. Unfortunately this is not always possible and instead the students are divided up amongst the other groups. When cover is not available, the students will always be received at school on the first day but after that they will be sent home if cover is still unavailable. If such a situation arises you will be informed of this through PARRO.

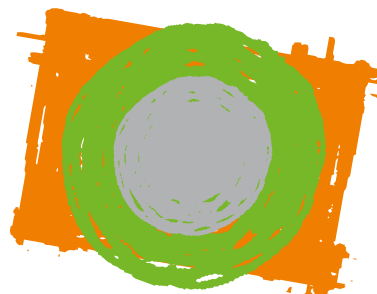
**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PROCEDURE IS DESCRIBED IN OUR EMERGENCY REPLACEMENT (ERP) PLAN.**

## 7.10 TEACHER STUDY DAY

Since learning is at the heart of all we do, also our professional development as teachers is important to extend our expertise. Days devoted to staff professional development are referred to as 'professional development (or study) days'. These days can be found in our school year calendar (on our information poster and [website](#)).

## 7.11 SCHOOL PHOTOS

The school photographer visits the school each year. The photographer takes individual photos of all the students and will also photograph siblings together. In addition, a class photo is taken of each group. The price of the pictures will be indicated with the picture set, and parents may decide whether to purchase the pictures directly from the photographer. The dates when the photographer will be with us are provided in the [school calendar](#) and in the news letter.



## 7.12 PRIVACY, VIDEOS, PHOTOS

For teaching, guiding students and general administration, student data is recorded. The recording and use of this personal data is limited to information that is strictly necessary for their education. The data is stored securely and access to it is limited in accordance with AVG (GDPR).

Students information is only shared with other organisations if parents give permission for this, unless this exchange is required by law. Parents have the right to view data from and about their child(ren), and have it corrected or removed if necessary. If you have questions, please contact the teacher or the Management Team.

On occasions we may make short video recordings of your child's class for training/ coaching/staff development purposes. These videos are for internal use only and will not be published via the internet or made available to outside agencies. Parental permission will be requested before recording commences.

For the use of images and digital recordings of students in school documents, school website, social media or the press, we seek parents' consent. Sharing our learning through pictures on these platforms is a great way to engage parents. When no consent has been given, we will exclude the student during image and digital recordings or make sure their face is unrecognizable. Parents are welcome to contact us should they wish for an image or digital recording of their child to be removed.

**OUR BOARD FLOREER HAS A PRIVACY POLICY WHICH DESCRIBES HOW STUDENT DATA IS DEALT WITH AT SCHOOL, AND WHAT THE RIGHTS ARE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS.**

## 7.13 CONFIDENTIAL PERSON

Optimist International School has assigned a teacher to support parents and students with confidential issues. This person will act independently whilst respecting the privacy of parents and students. Our confidential person is Ms. Katie Zalewska. Contact should be made via email: [katie.zalewska@sopoh.nl](mailto:katie.zalewska@sopoh.nl)

Floreer also has an internal confidential person, her name is Bernadette and her email: [info@in-b-tweenadvies.nl](mailto:info@in-b-tweenadvies.nl)

For an educational or organisational question, remark, compliment or complaint please contact the Management Team.

## 7.14 BIRTHDAYS

When it is your child's birthday he/she can bring in a small treat (a "traktatie") for his/her class. Please keep any class treat small and modest. The teachers celebrate their birthdays together on Teachers' Day, the date of which can be found in the [school calendar](#). Parents should arrange the distribution of birthday party invitations outside of teaching hours. We ask that parents refrain from asking teachers to become involved.

## 7.15 PETS

While there are benefits to the interaction between children and animals, we also need to be aware of the risks associated with the presence of animals on school grounds. The presence of dogs in and around schools is a controversial subject. The presence of a dog may cause a student who has allergies to have a reaction that is detrimental to the health of the child. To ensure our school is safe and comfortable for all users, management has developed the following requirements regarding dogs in and on school grounds. Dogs are not allowed in the school or classroom unless they are serving as an aid to a staff member, parent, child or visitor. In such cases, an up-to-date vaccination record must be provided for the animal. Dogs are also not allowed on school grounds during the hours in which students are present. During non-student hours dogs must be leashed.

## 7.16 CLOTHING

No uniform is required. Students are encouraged to come to school in comfortable clothing in which they can move freely. Plimsolls, soft-shoes, or slippers are required for indoor use. Please dress your child in clothing that is easily washed so that they may enjoy the activities provided, especially children in Group 0 and 1. Since these activities include play-dough, painting, glue, sand and water play, it is difficult for younger students to "stay clean". We have painting aprons the students wear during messy or wet activities. If you require further protection for your child's clothing, you are welcome to provide your own apron or smock.

Regarding PE lessons, we request parents of students in Group 0 and 1 to dress your child in clothing and shoes which make dressing and undressing easy for them when they have PE lessons. They usually have PE lessons in their undergarments. However, you are welcome to provide sports clothing if you wish. Please provide gym shoes, which can be left at school. Students from Group 3 – 7 are requested to bring sports clothing in a backpack or bag with shorts or jogging trousers, T-shirt and suitable sports shoes which are not used as outdoor shoes (to protect the gyms' floors). Parents should arrange for appropriate clothing and footwear. Please check the footwear regularly, since children are growing fast and their shoe size changes. To prevent injuries to themselves and others, students are not allowed to wear jewellery or accessories during PE lessons. These items can be given to the PE teacher during the lessons, or the class teacher before walking to the gym. Long hair must be tied back.



### 7.17 PERSONAL BELONGINGS (AND LOST PROPERTY)

If your child wishes to bring something of interest to show the teacher or other students, please explain to your child about taking personal responsibility for their own belongings. Some teachers set aside a weekly time for sharing and talking about precious items from home (show and tell). She/he may give the item to the class teacher for safekeeping.

Throughout the school year a lot of items, especially clothing, are left behind at school. We advise you to put the name of your child in his/her bag, on gym clothes and sneakers. Lost property is put into crates in the reception area. Items which are not recovered are ultimately donated to charity. The school cannot accept any liability for lost or damaged items such as watches, jewellery, purses or any other similar items.

### 7.18 MOBILE PHONES

If a child has a legitimate reason to call home then he/she will be allowed to use the school phone. Messages for any child should pass via the office and not via mobile phones. Mobile phones should be switched off during school hours, never taken outside (playground) and be kept in the child's bag. Phones are the child's own responsibility and are only to be used in emergencies. Compensation for loss, damage and/or theft of a mobile phone cannot be recovered from the school.

### 7.19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM AND FIRST AID

Each school is required to set up a system whereby it can provide emergency assistance. At our school several staff members have completed a course where they are trained to act effectively in case of accident or emergency (they are known in Dutch as 'BHV-ers, Bedrijfs Hulp Verleners'). They also receive an annual refresher course. This team organises a fire drill at school twice a year.

Parents must provide telephone numbers where they, or an alternative designated adult, may be reached in the event of illness or injury of their child. These details can be provided during the enrolment process. Please send written notice to our office if any contact numbers change during the year.

If something happens and your child needs emergency care during the school day we take the following steps:

- ★ If it is only a minor accident then the student is treated by his/her own teacher, sometimes assisted by one of the BHV-ers. As mentioned above, at our school several teachers have received the proper training to respond correctly to accidents or emergencies
- ★ If we are in any doubt then we call the parent(s) and if you are unreachable then we call the alternative designated person you provided us with. Parents then take the lead and decide how they wish to proceed
- ★ If you are not at home and the alternative designated contact person is also unreachable then a member of staff will take your child to a doctor, or if necessary, to the local hospital
- ★ If it is a very serious accident then of course we immediately call Emergency Medical Services (112), as well as seeking urgent contact with the parent(s)

**MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN OUR SAFETY POLICY.**



### 7.20 TV/MULTIMEDIA USE

We recognise the value of television and multimedia when used to supplement the curriculum. Teachers will exercise their professional judgement when choosing to use television and/or video. We have the following guidelines to facilitate responsible use of this medium. We use it to support curriculum objectives, when it is age appropriate and in rare cases for entertainment purposes.

### 7.21 VISITORS

All visitors are required to check in at the office upon arrival in accordance with our visitor protocol state the nature of their visit. Students' guests from other educational institutions must receive permission from the classroom teacher in advance of any visit. Normally, such visitors are quite welcome for short periods of time.

### 7.22 INSURANCE

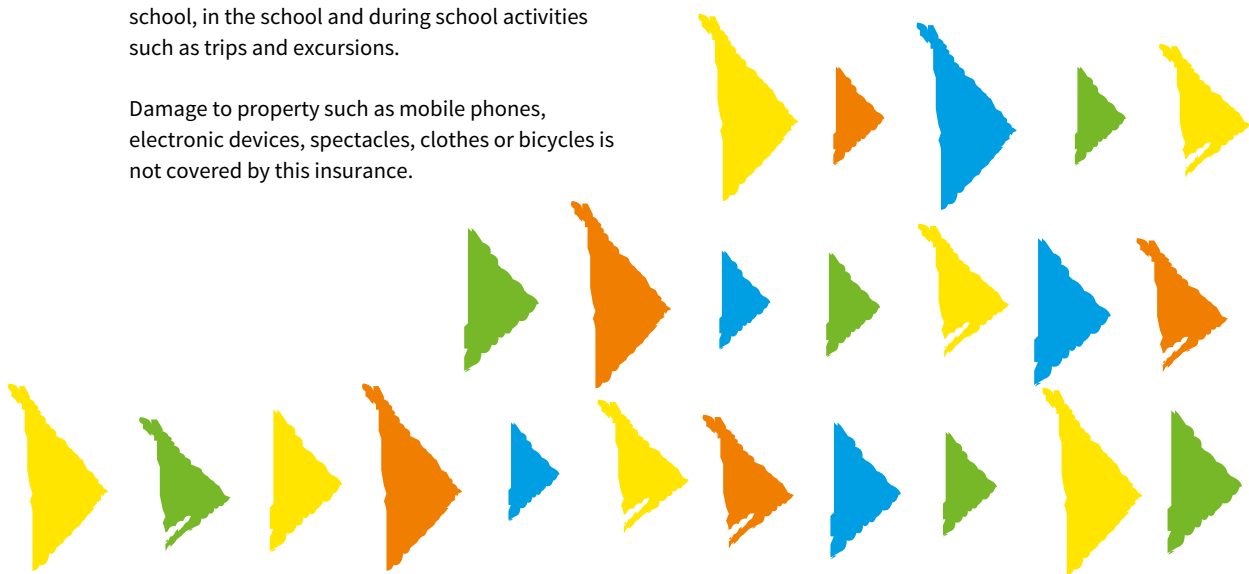
The school has a collective accident insurance policy for students which provides maximum cover for cases ranging from dental to fatal injury. This insurance covers only such injuries which are not covered by the student's own health insurance policy. It applies to injuries incurred on the way to school, in the school and during school activities such as trips and excursions.

Damage to property such as mobile phones, electronic devices, spectacles, clothes or bicycles is not covered by this insurance.

### 7.23 TRANSPORT DURING EXCURSIONS

To support IPC and to enrich our curriculum trips are organized during school hours, under the supervision of teachers and volunteers (parents). On occasions, the use of private cars (belonging to parents) for transporting small numbers of students may be required.

**TO MINIMISE THE RISK DURING TRANSPORT AND TO GUARANTEE SAFETY, RULES FOR ALL TYPES OF TRANSPORT (PRIVATE, BUS, TAXI, PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND BIKE HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP. THESE CAN BE FOUND IN OUR SAFETY POLICY.**





# 8. CODE OF CONDUCT

Our basic premise is that every student should feel seen, appreciated and safe. Only then will he or she be able to learn.

THE SCHOOL'S SAFETY POLICY SETS OUT HOW WE SHOULD BEHAVE TOWARDS EACH OTHER.

## 8.1 SCHOOL RULES

We apply the following basic rules of conduct and monitor compliance. All involved are expected to adhere to the established rules of conduct. The purpose of the code of conduct is to:

- ★ Create a good social teaching and learning climate, in which all those involved feel comfortable and secure
- ★ Contribute to the prevention of abuse of power in a broad sense
- ★ Promote and monitor safety, health and welfare for all those involved with the school
- ★ Protect the privacy of everyone involved

Our rules of conduct are:

- ★ We accept and respect each other and the school creates room for everyone to be different; sex, character, religion, race, physical and/or mental impairment and we promote equal rights for all students, staff and parents
- ★ We have courtesy, consideration and show respect for those in authority and our peers. This means that we are polite to everyone, listen to each other, and talk calmly and in a friendly manner (which means we neither tease, nor bully)
- ★ We are careful with each other and each other's belongings
- ★ We walk calmly in the school building

IN CASE OF VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WE FOLLOW THE PROCEDURE PROVIDED IN OUR SAFETY POLICY.

## 8.2 PEDAGOGICAL CLIMATE

Most importantly, we believe it is important to prevent behavioural problems by behavioural management:

- ★ We approach the students with an **open and positive attitude**
- ★ We ensure **predictable** teacher behaviour. The students know where they stand, what is expected of them and what the limits are. We are clear and consistent ("do what you say and say what you do"). All teachers react in the same way to ensure consistency across the school
- ★ We provide **structure** so that the students know what is coming (such as a visible daily schedule with a fixed sequence of activities)
- ★ We exercise a **positive control** on behaviour to stimulate desired behaviour. This means that there is more positive than negative feedback (ratio at least 4: 1)
- ★ We focus on **positive reinforcement**. If behaviour needs to be addressed this is done appropriately and in a small setting (away from the attention of other students as much as possible)
- ★ We are **proactive**. Because we know our students, we know in which situations they need our support. We examine in advance where the problems can arise and respond to them. We also make agreements in advance with those students who have difficulty in certain situations
- ★ We ensure that students are always **under the supervision of a teacher**, including when they are outside or when changing clothes for the PE lessons. In this way, students know there is always someone around who they can go to with questions or problems
- ★ We enable and invite both students and colleagues to participate in a safe manner – both physically and mentally – and anticipate and **prevent threatening or unsafe situations**
- ★ We assume that **behaviour is learned** and it is often not unwillingness but powerlessness. If students find it difficult to behave in a certain

way, we examine what these students need and we teach them the necessary skills for achieving their goals. In addition to social-emotional methods and our own expertise (such as a behaviour specialist and a child coach), we may also use external assistance

- ★ We speak to a student about his/her behaviour (the behaviour is the problem and not the student as a person)
- ★ We believe it is important to **work closely with parents** when seeking to improve behaviour, keeping the lines of communication short. We also work together by involving colleagues and learning from and with each other in dealing with specific behaviour
- ★ We make students aware of their duties through open communication, by **being role models** for them, providing examples of suitable conduct, such as being respectful, courteous and friendly

With an exciting curriculum and effective behaviour modelling, we aim to create a positive school climate. Our starting premise is that behaviour is learned. If students continually have difficulty with certain behaviour we look into the possible cause or trigger of this behaviour and what the student needs.

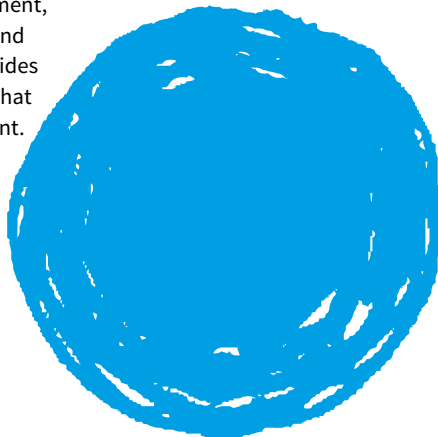
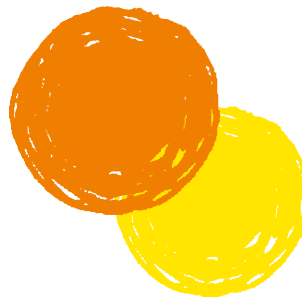
We relate to the personal goals of the IPC. These IPC goals and daily circle time are an important part of our social and emotional curriculum. Also behaviour aspects related to these subjects are discussed. Teachers relate as much as possible to current events and those that are relevant to the students.

We monitor the social-emotional development of our students also, with a standardised assessment, twice a year for all groups: Student Attitudes and mindsets to Self and School (PASS). PASS provides insight into students' attitudes and mindsets that may have a negative impact on their attainment. PASS looks at nine attitude factors.



### 8.3 INTERVENTIONS ON BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Sometimes things go wrong, despite our best efforts. To be able to deal with difficult situations, a step-by-step plan has been devised. This can be found in our Safety policy. It acts as a roadmap giving clear directions, and can be applied to multiple situations. The step-by-step plan is derived from the Floreer protocol 'Suspension and removal'. In addition to sanctioning, we also remain in discussion with parents to ensure that we find the best solution for the student. We usually use an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to support the student with their social-emotional skills.



## 8.4 BULLYING

Bullying is a problem that we face and tackle seriously. There is a difference between teasing (one-off) and bullying (structural). We recognize the difference between teasing and bullying, and handle cases of either with care. We do not tolerate bullying or teasing at our school.

Our conditions are:

- ★ We see bullying as a problem for all parties directly involved: students (bullied students, bullies and the silent group), teachers and the parent(s)
- ★ When a staff member picks up on signals of bullying behaviour whether these are his/her own observations or information received from parents or students, they will act accordingly
- ★ The school wants to prevent bullying. Should it occur, the victim and bully will have a conversation with the teacher (and in some cases with each other) with the aim of resolving the situation and preventing any further issues
- ★ If bullying occurs, teachers (in cooperation with the parents) will respond and take a clear position
- ★ When bullying, despite all best efforts, re-emerges, then the school takes a more direct approach
- ★ If the problem is not addressed correctly or the approach does not produce the desired result, then the confidential adviser becomes involved. The confidential adviser (Mrs. Katarzyna Zalewska) can investigate the problem, consult experts and a suitable authority

**IN OUR SAFETY POLICY OUR INTERVENTIONS ON BULLYING ARE DESCRIBED IN DETAIL.**

## 8.5 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

Working relationships can sometimes break down. We value parents being open with us, and you have every right to expect the same from us. We give a high priority to communication, openness and transparency towards parents. If we are made aware of a potential or occurring problem then we act accordingly. It may be that as a parent of a child at the school you are concerned or unhappy about something regarding school life. In principle, we assume that most complaints can be addressed satisfactorily between ourselves (the school and the parents), and we encourage you to express any concerns or dissatisfaction in the following way:

- ★ To the teacher, if it concerns something that happened in the class
- ★ To the school Management Team if it concerns something which transcends the classroom setting
- ★ To the Participation Council if it is an issue which needs to be discussed from a broader perspective

If you cannot reach a satisfactory resolution with the teacher or the school Management Team then you can present your complaint to the governing body or, for an entirely independent investigation, to the National Complaints Committee. The order in which issues should be dealt with is set out in a complaints procedure which can be found on the Floreer website ([www.stichtingfloreer.nl](http://www.stichtingfloreer.nl))

## 8.6 EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN

For information about school inspections, please contact the education ombudsman at [info@owinsp.nl](mailto:info@owinsp.nl), [onderwijsinspectie.nl](http://onderwijsinspectie.nl). For any questions you have about education in the Netherlands you can call: 0800 - 8051. To register a complaint you can make confidential contact with the education ombudsman by calling: 0900 - 111 3 111







## 9. ADMISSIONS, APPLICATION AND FEES

## 9.1 ADMISSION PROCESS

### STEP 1: MAKING CONTACT

Application is open to parents of children who are 3 years or older at the time of application. Applications of younger children are considered from the moment they turn 3. For more information about our Early Years standards, we refer to our policy document which can be found on the website.

Application to our school can only be through our Open Apply portal. The admission process begins when you contact us with your enquiry through our website, by phone or Open Apply. We will offer help and advice as you need it, to enable your family to become part of our school family. Once the registration of interest is complete you can arrange your own tour or call from the options on our portal. In addition, we welcome parents and students to our frequent Open Days, registration is needed. If you still have questions, please contact the Admissions Manager. We do not consider a telephone call, email, or conversation as an application. Students are only 'applied' when all documentation is completed on Open Apply.

### STEP 2: INTRODUCTORY MEETING — WHEN POSSIBLE

It is our pleasure to welcome you to our school. Sometimes this is not possible, for example, if you reside abroad. When families are unable to visit us at the application stage we would like to propose an online meeting. We appreciate this 'virtual' acquaintance and the opportunity to discuss your family's needs individually. We are contactable by phone: +31 23 303 59 24 or by email: [info@optimist-international-school.nl](mailto:info@optimist-international-school.nl).

At this time a registration invoice of €200 will be generated and this will be sent to the primary parents' email. We consider the following points when a new student applies to join our school:

- ★ the academic suitability of the student aligned with our pedagogical philosophy
- ★ a positive review/feedback from the previous school (where applicable)
- ★ Age suitability: Students can be registered earlier; however, we begin the process of application after the student's 3rd birthday.
- ★ The parent, student, school partnership
- ★ We recommend children to join (a part of) the introductory meeting.

During the intake conversation we will tell you more about our school and offer a tour. We also discuss the information you have provided, try to understand the nature of your relocation, your family's expectations and plans about the future.

### STEP 3: ADMISSION'S APPLICATION

Once both parties consider OIS the right school for your family, we will ask you to complete the full application and pay the registration fee. Our checklist will help you step-by-step with this process. During this process OIS will contact previous schools or have the possibility to schedule another meeting to discuss the child's needs with the school Counsellor. The registration fee is non-refundable. If you have questions regarding this process, the timeline or seek clarity regarding the information being requested, please feel free to contact the Admissions Manager (see page 5 for contact info).

### STEP 4: CONFIRMATION

Once all the admissions documentation is uploaded onto Open Apply and we have discussed your family's educational needs, parents are required to send a confirmatory email to proceed further. In confirmation of school place, parents are required to pay the deposit fee of €500 within 14 days. The deposit fee is refundable upon leaving the school providing all financial obligations have been fulfilled. Should you withdraw from the application process, the deposit fee will be retained. The tuition fee will be invoiced when the child starts school. Parents are required to pay first instalment of this fee within 14 days. When there is no immediately available place and the student joins a waiting list, we will not send any further requests for payment – either deposit or tuition fee - until such time as a place becomes available.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Families requiring additional support for their child at school are obliged to provide all educational documentation appertaining accurately and completely to their child's academic history, including psychological/educational evaluations, dyslexia assessment and details of extra academic/specialist support received in the past. Parents give permission for the school to contact the child's previous school or professionals involved with the child to obtain a complete overview of the student's needs.

Failure to disclose information to the school relating to a child's existing learning or behavioural difficulties may jeopardize your child's school place.

## 9.2 ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL / GROUP PLACEMENT

### SCHOOL FEE POLICY

Once accepted, students may start at the agreed moment or have discussed a postponement with the Admissions Manager.

Please pay attention to the legislation in The Netherlands, this states that students must attend school from their 5th birthday and continue until the end of the year of their 16th birthday. In practice, almost all children in The Netherlands are in school from the age of four.

**AT OIS STUDENTS MAY COMMENCE SCHOOL FROM 4 YEARS OF AGE ONCE THE APPLICATION PROCESS HAS BEEN COMPLETED.**

### PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS

Students are usually placed in a chronologically appropriate class. The guidelines for this group selection can be found in the '**Group selection – age equivalence document**'. For ease this is taken from the annual point of birthdays from October 1<sup>st</sup> until 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Student will be placed in a class/milepost along with other students of the same or similar ages. This is the best place for social, behavioural and emotional development of children and it enables them to thrive and learn best from the curriculum. Exceptions to the age guidelines are made infrequently and only upon careful evaluation by the Director and Learning Leader.

The final placement decision is made by the school.

Within the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), units and learning objectives are broken down into 'Mileposts' with each milepost spanning one or two academic years. Within our Mileposts we have one or more groups and where necessary combination groups.

When joining our school at **the beginning of the school year**, new students will enter an age appropriate Milepost. During the first few weeks each student will be assessed and based upon these assessments we may recommend that they are placed in different group. Teachers and parents will discuss this change and the reason for the advice before it takes place.

When joining our school **during the school year** we ask that new students make an initial visit to the school and the classroom ahead of the start date to meet the teacher and his/her peers. Again the same period of assessment which is referred to in the paragraph above is undertaken with the same procedure of consultation between teachers and parents.

If, after a period of no less than six weeks in school, we feel we cannot meet the academic, social/emotional or physical needs of your child, we reserve the right to recommend and advise regarding a transfer to an establishment that we believe can better accommodate these needs.

### SCHOOL FEES, PAYMENT STRUCTURE, CONFIRMATION OF A PLACE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Information about these policies can be found on our school website: [www.optimist-international-school.nl](http://www.optimist-international-school.nl). Please ask if the Admissions Manager you require further information.

### PRIVACY, PHOTOGRAPHY AND PUBLICITY

It is the practice of OIS to show photographs of school activities and events on its website and in other online school publications. These may also include press releases and advertising. Should you wish that your child DOES NOT appear in any such material, please state this on the application form or send a written request to the Director of School.

Parents accept that OIS has a legal obligation to conform to the requests of the host country's Government Ministries in providing some personal information appertaining to the student when requested (This is usually only information concerning the age and nationality of students.)

## GDPR (AVG)

A general awareness regarding the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) requirements for data protection across The EU is everyone's concern. At OIS we are working with our own school Board Floerer and external service providers who offer and support our school operating systems to ensure that the privacy and security of your personal data is correct and within the confines of GDPR regulations.

## RESERVING YOUR CHILD'S PLACE FOR THE NEXT YEAR

**New Learners:** If you would like your child to attend OIS as they turn four it is possible to reserve a place in an Early Years class advance of their birthday providing places are available for the anticipated start date. We only process applications from the moment a child turns 3 years old.

**Placement of siblings at OIS:** When you have a child attending our school, brothers and sisters will be given priority in the application process.

## WITHDRAWING /REFUNDING

We hope your child can complete the academic year. However, due to the nature of international life, there are often circumstances beyond everyone's control which deems it necessary for the family to move during the school year and therefore withdraw your child. In this situation, please notify the Admissions Manager, Fouzia by email: [Fouzia.begam@sopoh.nl](mailto:Fouzia.begam@sopoh.nl). Then, we will send you a link to the correct documentation where you can complete the withdrawal process on Open Apply.

### Notice period for withdrawal from school:

**Date of calculation:** If a student leaves before 15th of the months, school fees for that month will be refunded, as per the refund policy. If a student leaves after 15th of the month, only the school fees for the following month will be refunded.

A notice period is required before you leave; at least six weeks' notice is necessary if you leave between the beginning of the school year and 1 April. We stipulate that the notice period is either served in school or paid in lieu of the 6 weeks fees.

If you leave later in the school year, after 2 April and until the end of the school year when the re-enrolment process is completed, a notice period of at least eight weeks' notice is necessary. We stipulate that the notice period is either served in school or paid in lieu of the 8 weeks fees.

## 9.3 SCHOOL FEES POLICY

Optimist International School is able to offer first-class international education at a reasonable cost to families thanks to funding from the Dutch Ministry of Education. In addition we charge school fees which are set annually, in accordance with Dutch International Primary Guidelines. The tuition fees enable us to keep the class sizes small, to hire staff internationally and to provide a modern, caring and supportive learning environment.

Optimist International School is a member of DIS, Dutch International (Primary and Secondary) Schools ([www.dutchinternationalschools.nl](http://www.dutchinternationalschools.nl)), all of whom are partially funded by the Dutch government. Since this funding does not cover all costs, Dutch International School are allowed to charge school fees, within a pre-agreed range, with permission from the Dutch Ministry of Education.

To process your application an admission fee of €200 and a deposit of €500 is due within 14 days of us confirming a place at our school. The application fee is non-refundable, and the deposit fee is refundable either upon leaving the school and providing all financial obligations have been fulfilled or, should you withdraw from the application process; a notice period of 4 weeks is required, or the deposit will be retained.

The Annual school fee for academic year 2023-2024 is €5200 which covers all educational costs including lunchtime supervision, field trips, activities, and excursions.

By signing the School Fees Policy parents agree to proceed with payments and accept the terms and conditions stated in the Admissions Policy.



## SCHOOL FEE STRUCTURE

It is possible to choose how you pay the school fees when your child joins the school.

- ★ **Option 1** - School fees can be paid in full by one payment for €4960.
- ★ **Option 2** - School fees can be paid in two equal payments of €2480 made 1 June and 1 December annually.
- ★ **Option 3** - School fees can be paid in four equal payments of €1240 made 1 June, 1 September, 1 January, 1 May.

If you have any questions regarding school fee, please contact the Admissions Manager.

## 9.4 WIS COLLECT

Optimist International School uses **WIS COLLECT** as its on-line financial portal. Once registered, families will receive a hyperlink to their personal account; from here parents can view invoices, payments, statement of accounts and generate receipts of payment. All communication from WIS Collect is via email and through its on-line facilities. WIS COLLECT is connected to the primary parent using their email address. Please ensure we have your up-to-date email to avoid any mis-communication. All school fee payments must be paid by 1 May of the corresponding school year.

Date of calculation: If a student starts before 15th of the month, school fees for the corresponding month apply. If a student starts after 15th of the month, the following months school fees apply.

Our tuition fees for 2022-2023 have not yet been determined however, we confirm that primary tuition fees will not increase by more than 5% annually. Our new school fees policy is available from 1 April annually on our school website.

## 9.5 RESERVING YOUR CHILD'S PLACE FOR THE CURRENT OR SUBSEQUENT YEAR

### NEW LEARNERS

If you would like your child to attend Optimist International School as they turn four it is possible to reserve a place in an Early Years class advance of their birthday providing places are available for the anticipated start date.

### PLACEMENT OF SIBLINGS AT OIS

When you have a child attending our school, brothers and sisters will be given priority in the application process.

### IF YOU START IN

### PAYMENT IN FULL (IN EUROS)

August, September	100%	-	4,960
October	90%	-	4,464
November	80%	-	3,968
December	70%	-	3,472
January	60%	-	2,976
February	50%	-	2,480
March	40%	-	1,984
April	30%	-	1,488
May	20%	-	992
June, July	10%	-	496

## 9.6 SCHOOL FEE REDUCTIONS AND PAYMENT STRUCTURE

School fees are reduced for families with three or more children attending our school at the same time. The school fee reduction for a **third child is 30%** and the reduction for a **fourth child is 40%**.

Students starting school during the academic year will receive an invoice based on the pro rata amount due (see table) within 14 days of confirmation of a place being available

Parents of new students will receive an invoice for the school fees before May 1st or directly after confirming admission when registering after May 1st. Payment of this fee must be made within 14 days of request; the school reserves the right to withdraw the student place if parents do not meet the payment obligations.

### RE-ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS

Annually, in March family's will receive a re-enrolment questionnaire seeking their intentions for the next school year. A response is requested by 1 April. Once the family's intentions are known and if they have indicated they will remain in school we will follow the payment option choice they have selected in the re-enrolment questionnaire (as indicated on page 1 of this Policy). In the event that a family is uncertain for the next academic year; an extended period of one-month will be given. Final confirmation must be made by 1 May and from there onwards the school fees policy applies to the coming academic school year.

### WITHDRAWING FROM THE SCHOOL AND REFUNDING

When your child is attending our school, we hope that they can complete the academic year.

Due to the nature of international life, there are often circumstances beyond everyone's control which deems it necessary for the family to move during the school year and therefore withdraw your child. In this situation please notify the Admissions Manager and complete a Withdrawal Form, available from our website or upon request.

You have recently contacted us as you wish to withdraw your child(ren) from our school.

Where possible we hope students can complete the academic year. However, due to the nature of international life, there are often circumstances beyond everyone's control which deems it necessary for the family to move during the school year and therefore withdraw your child.

The following notice period for withdrawal apply:

\* A notice period is required before you leave; at least six weeks' notice is necessary if you leave between the beginning of the school year and 1 April. We stipulate that the notice period is either served in school or paid in lieu of the 6 weeks fees.

\* If you leave later in the school year after 2 April and until the end of the school year when the re-enrolment process is completed, a notice period of at least eight weeks' notice is necessary. We stipulate that the notice period is either served in school or paid in lieu of the 8 weeks fees.

\* If you give notice of withdrawal during the summer holidays, after confirming a place for the next academic year, the deposit fee will be retained by the school in lieu of a notice period.

### REFUND OF SCHOOL FEES

If a family is leaving during the school year, an entitlement for a refund of a percentage of the school fees paid is calculated below: A refund is made only if all financial obligations have been met and the appropriate notice period as indicated in both the Admissions and School Fees Policy have been fulfilled. When one or both stipulations have not been fulfilled, the deposit fee, paid upon registration, will be retained to cover any financial shortfall. Date of calculation: If a student leaves before 15th of the months, school fees for that month will be refunded, as per the refund policy. If a student leaves after 15th of the month, only the school fees for the following month will be refunded.

REFUNDING OF TUITION FEE (IN EUROS)	
IF YOU LEAVE IN	
September-December	50%
January	40%
February	30%
March	20%
April	10%
May-July	0%

## 9.7 BANK DETAILS

**PLEASE SEND YOUR PAYMENT WITH THE INVOICE  
NUMBER AND THE NAME OF YOUR CHILD TO:**

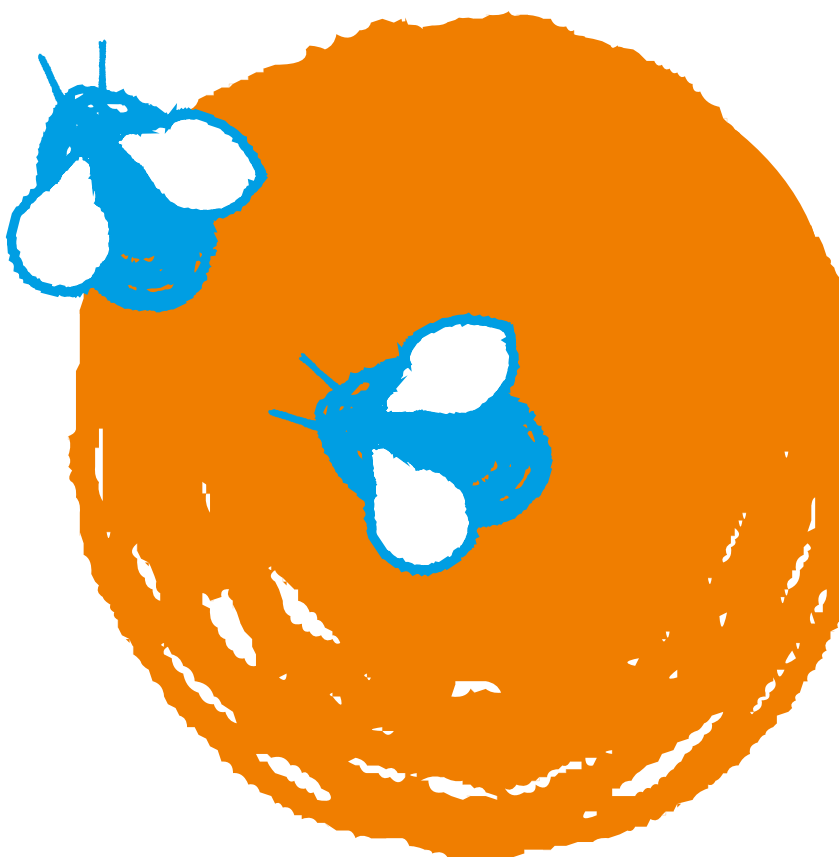
Stichting Floerer

Haarlemmermeer

Bank: ABN-AMRO

IBAN: NL62ABNA0575370270

BIC: ABNANL2A



## OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

*www*

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2134 XL Hoofddorp

+31 (0)23 303 59 24

[info@optimist-international-school.nl](mailto:info@optimist-international-school.nl)

[www.optimist-international-school.nl](http://www.optimist-international-school.nl)

You can also find us on Facebook,  
Instagram and LinkedIn



**Floreer**  
Openbaar  
onderwijs en opvang

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