



LANGUAGE FRIENDLY SCHOOL PORTRAIT

# Optimist International School



Hoofddorp, the Netherlands



# Overview

## OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

- Location: Hoofddorp, The Netherlands
- Type of school: Primary School, International
- Number of students: 190
- Number of staff: 30
- Languages spoken in school community: (see language breakdown below) top 5:
- Language Friendly certified since: 2020



Language Friendly School 2020



# Motivation for becoming a Language Friendly School

## THEIR STORY

The Optimist International School envisions an inclusive environment with increased parental involvement. Children, staff and parents need to feel welcome in the school. The Language Friendly School can contribute to finding an approach to navigating differences despite languages.



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**WE ARE PROUD OF OUR CULTURES AND  
LANGUAGES AND WE WANT TO INCLUDE  
LANGUAGES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**

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# Language Friendly Activities

**TOP 3 FOR THE  
OPTIMIST**

## MULTILINGUAL GREETING

Starting the day by greeting the children in the language they prefer. The child greets the teacher and the teacher repeats the greeting in that same language.

## BIRTHDAY SONGS

In the classroom, birthdays are celebrated by singing a birthday song in different languages

## MAKING LANGUAGES VISIBLE

In some subjects, teachers allow students to use their home language to give presentations.



# Benefits

## **BENEFITS OF BECOMING A LANGUAGE FRIENDLY SCHOOL**

Students are more curious towards other languages and aware that other students also speak different languages at home. Students seem to be more confident once the teacher and the school staff have acknowledged the student's home language(s). Making mistakes when using the school language (English) is not seen as failure because students know that English is just one of the languages that they speak and they're all learning more than one language at a time. Teachers are open to using home languages in the classroom and when students demonstrate their skills or knowledge in their home language, it is valued just as highly as skills or knowledge in English.





TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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**START SMALL**

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# TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Start small. Everyday classroom situations provide plenty of opportunities to include home languages and make the languages be heard or visible.

During lunch breaks students could discuss words for food in their home language and notice if the word sounds similar or very different in other languages.

When celebrating children's birthdays at school, the teacher could play the birthday song in the home language of the birthday boy/girl and encourage everyone to join in.

Multilingual displays in the classrooms and school halls help everyone to feel welcome and included.





# Plans for the Future

## THE OPTIMIST

### REFLECT & INCLUDE

The first step for the Optimist is to share and reflect on the approaches and materials. This includes taking inventory of languages among students in the form of a questionnaire and parent-teacher meetings for parents and students. This is framed in the form of “we are proud of our cultures and languages and we want to include languages as much as possible”. Making intentions clear to the parents and to build trust and help them feel at ease.

### VISIBLE LANGUAGES

A second goal is making all languages visible in our school and show that these are equally valued (e.g. the school mission; the school has 8 personal goals, which they want to have visually present in the school).

### ENGAGING PARENTS

Inform parents to help them understand language acquisition (e.g. parent evening, workshop, newsletters, etc).

### TEACHER SUPPORT

The school will organize training and workshops for teachers about multilingual pedagogical approaches, including planning, using strategies and tools.

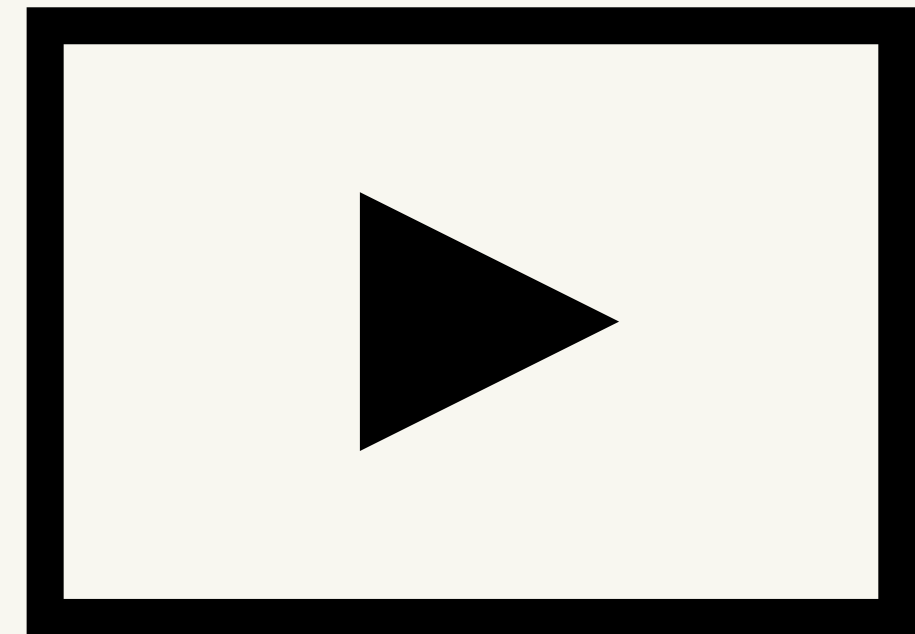
# Useful Links



[Website Optimist International School](#)



[Article about Optimist as Language Friendly School](#)



[Optimist International School Introduces their school](#)

# LANGUAGE BREAKDOWN

TOP 4 ARE  
HIGHLIGHTED

**Hindi**

**Tamil**

**Dutch**

**Malayalam**

German

Polish

French

Russian

Spanish

AT THE  
OPTIMIST, MORE  
THAN 30  
LANGUAGES ARE  
SPOKEN BY  
THEIR  
STUDENTS.



## OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

VIDEO



# FOLLOW OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

INSTAGRAM



FACEBOOK



# LANGUAGE FRIENDLY SCHOOL

## Contact

### WEBSITE

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**RUTU**  
Foundation