



EARLY YEARS STANDARD

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Waddenweg 87
2134 XL Hoofddorp
+31 (0)23 303 59 24


info@optimist-international-school.nl
www.optimist-international-school.nl

**OPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL**





INTRODUCTION TO EARLY YEARS

Prior to joining Early Years, we invite families to complete a short online questionnaire about their child. This gives Early Years teachers very specific information about a young child that can help us to plan for their needs and interests. We ask parents to ensure that they have shared all possible information and previous reports with the team so that we are up to date with all relevant information about a child.

We invite families of new students to come for an Induction Meeting. This is a meeting where we discuss how students will be integrated into the class, find out more about the student and their family circumstances and show the child where their classroom is. The meetings are led by the child's class teacher and take place in person – not online. We may also invite our MLL teachers to join these meetings so that we can get an overview of how we can support your child linguistically.

It is important that all new students attend these meetings alongside the parents so that the children get a chance to meet their teacher and see the school for themselves. We would like to meet all Early Years children and their families in person before the proposed start date of the student. If a family is unable to attend the meeting, then a new date for an Induction meeting can be arranged so that the child can start school on time. We are unable to let a new Early Years student start school without first meeting them as this is a vital part of their transition to school.

During our initial induction meeting with both the child and the families it may be agreed that a child may do a staggered induction period. This could be due to a previous lack of being in a school or under 4's Daycare setting, a recent move to the country or a specific family circumstance. This will be discussed during the induction meeting and revisited by the child's class teacher if needed during the first few days of attending school.

Starting school is a big step for every child so please ensure that where possible, you have allowed a little degree of flexibility in your family life to accommodate the settling in an induction period.

INDUCTION FOR STUDENTS WHO JOIN PARTWAY THROUGH THE ACADEMIC YEAR


Our standard induction for Early Years students who start school part way through the school year stay for just 2 or 3 hours for at least the first two days. This is because joining a busy class during the term is stressful and can be overstimulating for students. Starting slowly often means that the period of adjustment is smoother. After these initial days, if a student manages well, they may stay for lunch. If this goes well, they may commence a regular pattern of attendance. Teachers will stay in close contact with parents during the induction period. Please be flexible as we find the best way to start a child into the school environment.

School Readiness

We give a settling in period for all new students. This is around 6 weeks. During this time, staff work closely with individual students and monitor the way in which they are settling into school life. If we or parents have any concerns, then these are usually voiced within this period, and we can set up additional meetings if needed.

It may be that during this period, concerns become raised about the 'school readiness' of a child such as the child struggling with transitions, finding the length of the school day a challenge or finding it hard to manage their emotions during the day. It is during this time that we give extra care and attention to find a way to best support the needs of that child. During this settling in period, most students go through 'ups' and 'downs' as they acclimatise to life at school. It may be that a student becomes very tired after school or that they appear more emotional than they usually are. This is all part of the transition and adjusting to school life.





During this settling in period, it may become apparent that a student has a more specific need that may or is affecting their ability to settle into the school day. During this period, the class teacher will keep regular contact with the family. It may be that in this situation an alteration to the transition to school might be discussed. This could include:

- * A reduction in the number of hours of the school day for a specified period of time
- * A reduction in the number of days a child attends school for a specified period of time
- * Students who are struggling with self-care needs may be given clear and bespoke targets to help ensure that self-care and toilet needs are fully established within this period

Further support needed

Our education is inclusive, which means we include students with specific educational needs wherever possible, sometimes with the use of additional interventions or adaptations in our provision. We call this Wave 1 (basic) support. At some point there can be more concerns about the development of a child that exceeds the Wave 1 support, for example when the Wave 1 support doesn't have the desired effect, or the support becomes too complex. We – as regular school – are not in a position to offer individual support.

A referral to a more specialized setting can be necessary. External specialists are usually involved. The school Counsellor coordinates this. We can consult with an internal and external youth health care team (ZAT, Zorg Advies Team, care advisory team, consisting of our school doctor or school nurse of GGD and our school coach), or social workers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, child coaches, behaviour specialists and educational psychologists. This might also include further research, e.g., by 't Kabouterhuis (Okidos trajectory, diagnostics, treatment). Usually an Ondersteunings Perspectief Profiel (OPP), support perspective profile, is run for a longer period of time, during the school career of a child. This is signed by parents. In some situations, the safety of a child or children can be a concern. We have a protocol for that: our Safety policy.

In some cases, it may be apparent that a student has a very specific need which may greatly affect the way that they can access their learning at OIS. There are limited facilities 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 and skills and materials to aid most but not all students.


We are unable to support students who:

- * have complex special educational needs, not matching our basic and extra provision as described in our Standard Planning, monitoring progress and reporting, and extra support as described in Wave 2 and 3 has not led to significant progress or turns out to be too complex
- * need materials, equipment or specialized help that is not readily available
- * who require one-to-one guidance; It's referring to a student being unable to play, work or do an activity without a teacher
- * we have reached the maximum of students with special education needs in combination with English as Additional Support (EAL) needs.

When the needs of the student are no longer able to be met within the school, alternative solutions will be recommended and implemented. This could mean the school will arrange a transferal to an academic establishment that can better accommodate these needs.

We work within a regional collaborative partnership ('samenwerkingsverband') 'Passend Onderwijs Haarlemmermeer' to make agreements about support available to students and the appropriate place of education. In international education the offer of special education is very limited. This means that referral to another establishment, usually will be a Dutch accommodation.

As stated in our Admissions policy, 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.



Compulsory schooling in the Netherlands begins at age 5 therefore, there is some degree of flexibility with students in Early Years.

Starting School Kit

- * Small rucksack
- * Snack Box
- * Lunch box
- * Water bottle
- * Wellington (Welly/ Gum/ Rain) boots to stay at school

Many students have the same type of belongings and clothing. We strongly recommend that all items are clearly labelled. This applies in particular to food and drink containers and outdoor shoes and clothing.

We recommend a company called: <https://www.goedgemerkt.nl/>

OUR EARLY YEARS SPACES

ORGANISATION OF OUR EARLY YEARS UNIT AND STAFF

At OIS, we have two large Early Years classrooms and a multifunctional Atelier that adjoins both these classrooms. Students in Early Years are designated a 'Homeroom Class' and each child is attached to two teachers when they enrol. These teachers work together to carefully monitor the progress of their individual students and plan together the ways to move each individual child's learning on. These teachers are known as the 'Key Teachers' and directly take a lead with monitoring student progress, reporting and parent communication for the students in their respective Homeroom Classes.

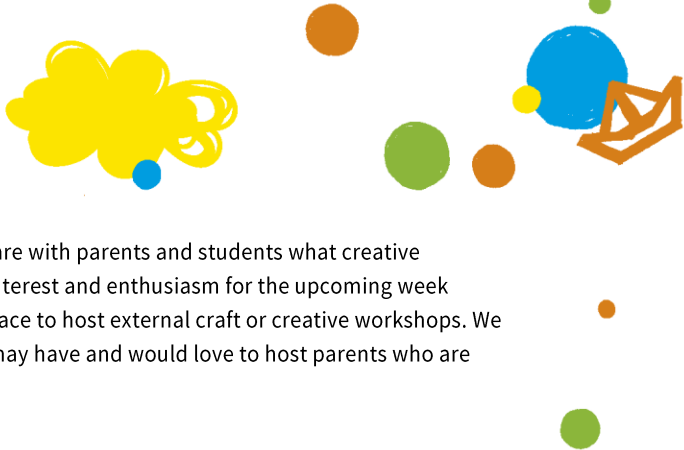
At OIS we have additional Early Years teachers and teaching assistants who work alongside the Key Teachers in the Early Years team, affording us more flexibility and a higher ratio of teacher to child in our learning spaces. These staff members are integral members of the team and help to plan and teach in our Atelier Space, support students pastorally, lead small group activities and facilitate learning moments in our continuous classroom provision. Each member of our Early Years team contributes different pedagogical skills, which enrich learning opportunities and help to tailor make continuous provision for the students.

Blended Learning experience

During the course of each week, the students engage in a blended learning experience that combines learning through continuous provision in their Homeroom Classes, enjoying specialist lessons and participating in our Atelier activities. Throughout the week, engaging and inviting, play based activities built around our IEYC curriculum and the children's developing interests are planned for and presented in the Atelier. These are facilitated by our Early Years teachers. Students are invited to join in the learning in this area, allowing them to mix together in small groups. Our Atelier space is ideal for large projects, collaborative learning and artistic projects that need more time and space to accomplish. Small group teaching occurs in the classrooms where teachers lead specific groups of children in key learning skills. This way, it is more personalised to the individual needs of such young children.

Atelier Learning

Students have autonomy to choose which Atelier activities they would like to engage with and teachers ensure that there is a balanced ratio of learners in the Homeroom Classes and in the Atelier, thus creating distinctly smaller learning groups in all our spaces during the day. Very short collective moments occur during the morning and in the afternoon where children from each respective Homeroom come together to enjoy a story or a key teaching focus. Ensuring that each child has a familiar classroom area yet providing our young learners with child led opportunities to collaborate together in a smaller, mixed Atelier group is a key part of our vision in helping our students to take risks, learn to problem solve, collaborate and communicate; lifelong skills that will stand our young students in good stead for the future.



Our Atelier space is carefully planned for and each week, we will share with parents and students what creative activities and learning opportunities are on offer to help generate interest and enthusiasm for the upcoming week ahead. Over the course of the year, we may also use this learning space to host external craft or creative workshops. We welcome our OIS parents to also share any creative expertise they may have and would love to host parents who are willing to lead creative activities.

THE ROLE OF EARLY YEARS TEACHERS AND PRACTITIONERS

At OIS, all members of our Early Years team work collaboratively and as a team to plan and facilitate learning for our young students. We aim to act as role models for our young students and model behavioural expectations that we expect students to employ. We strive to use consistency across the team in our language and expectations for our students to provide a safe environment where all our students know what to expect in whatever learning environment they are working in during the day.

The role of the Early Years teacher is to guide and foster a love of learning whilst setting engaging and challenging learning opportunities for all students. We carefully plan our learning environments so that the environment can act as 'The Third Teacher'. Parents are also regarded as teachers and facilitators of learning in their own child's development. In our learning environments, we present Continuous Provision learning opportunities so that all children have more autonomy over their learning yet are challenged by the provision that has been presented to them. Key Teachers observe the children's learning behaviours, guide and challenge the learning so students make progress from their own individual starting points.

We avoid long moments of whole class teaching so that the learning is more personalised and child led. This is based around well established and acknowledged current research and practise that advocates more autonomy in the Early Years classroom environments where teachers focus their attention on teaching learning skills and developing learning behaviours as opposed to teaching purely curricular or knowledge content.


We 'teach in the moment', observing patterns in children's learning behaviours and recognise moments where a child needs more stimulation or a different challenge. We play alongside students; modelling learning behaviours and language and we guide and support students who may need more explicit teaching of skills or knowledge. We blend together our IEYC curriculum foci, curricular context for Maths and Literacy, integrating these skills or knowledge objectives into our Continuous Provision ensuring that we give students the time to master the skills and learning at the pace they need.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE IN AN EARLY YEARS LEARNING AREA

At OIS, the learning environments reflect a play based pedagogical approach to learning. The children are engaged in learning from the moment they enter the classroom. Each of the classroom activities and core areas have been planned and set out to facilitate child led learning opportunities that reflect the child's own interests, IEYC topic themed curricular activities and areas where adults lead children in small group learning moments. We use our Atelier to facilitate a lot of the IEYC learning activities.

The classrooms are '**self-servicing**' and **enabling** which means that children may use and explore any resources that are available to them. They can access materials that can extend their learning and have more autonomy and choice in their learning which results in high levels of engagements. In allowing the children greater freedom and access to classroom provision, they can start to build natural links between ideas and make lateral connections. Some activities are whole class and we use these moments to introduce new vocabulary and come together as a wider class community or in small groups.

Staff use stimulating **invitations** for children to play, encouraging children to join in and challenge their own learning through adult facilitated activities and small group learning moments. Open ended **provocations** for children to play



are built around children's own fascinations and interests and are designed to get children talking, questioning and interacting with learning materials without a fixed or intended outcome. These are integral to the way the environment is created so that staff can both guide children and **extend** the learning but, at the same time provide **autonomy** for children to make their own choices, to **collaborate** with others or to pursue their own individual agendas. The Early Years day has been designed to reduce the number of transitions and to keep the students in a safe and familiar environment where they can grow in confidence and master more **authenticity** in their skillsets.

At OIS, the Early Years learning environments are committed to:

- * Being purposeful and planned learning spaces where children can access materials themselves
- * Being collaborative spaces that foster good communication skills
- * The use of high-quality play based learning materials
- * Respecting the diverse interests of children regardless of gender and embracing cultural diversity
- * Using engaging displays to showcase the progress of learning, display learning materials and celebrate success
- * Acknowledging the voice of the child through representing their words and interests in the classroom displays and layout
- * Providing both quiet and busy areas of learning
- * Including and welcoming the child's home language in the classroom. The language of instruction from staff is in English (or Dutch if in a Dutch lesson) but we support and encourage children using home language in their play

SAFEGUARDING AND CARE

At OIS, the care, wellbeing and safety of our students is of key importance. We take extra measures in Early Years to protect the vulnerable age and stage of our youngest learners.

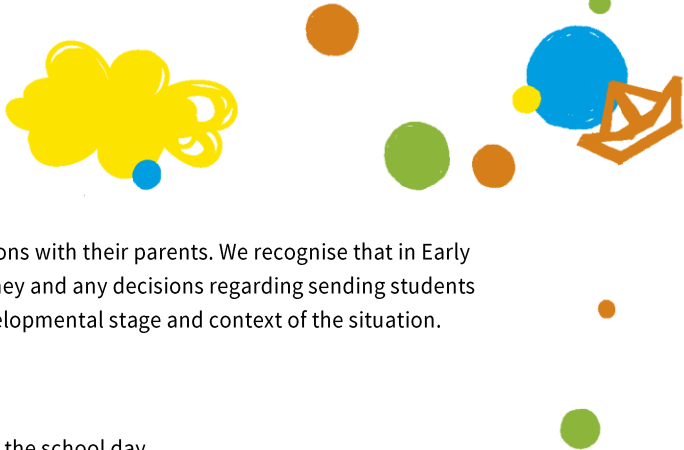
Intimate Care

During the school day, some students may have accidents which require a change of clothing such as a toilet accident or getting wet through play. We encourage students to change their own clothing where possible. All children are asked to bring in a change of clothing (which will be sent home at termly intervals to ensure continuous suitability of size and fit). When changing, students are asked to try this themselves. We will guide and support but are unable to wipe or clean intimate areas of your child. Instead, we can provide wipes and guidance so your child may clean themselves where needed. If your child is very distressed or very soiled, we will ensure that they are cared for to the best of our abilities but will call parents and carers if it is clear that your child needs to be washed or comforted at home. Please note that we do not have changing table or shower facilities at school and hot water access for washing intimate areas of the body is not possible.

Physical contact and expectations with young children

Young children often get distressed as they transition to school and learn how to manage their emotions. At OIS we comfort, support and guide children with firstly our words and gestures. We may use hand holding or, if a child initiates or requests, a small comforting hug. If a child is doing something that may endanger themselves or others, we may have to carefully, physically guide them into a safer area. This may involve on rare occasions picking your child up in order to move them to safety or to comfort them if they are injured in some way. We try to avoid this in our day-to-day contact with the students in order to protect both ourselves and children from physical harm such as tripping over whilst carrying a child.

In order to protect ourselves and children's physical wellbeing, we avoid unnecessary physical contact. We expect children to also manage their own physical contact with others showing respect, consent, kindness and appropriateness at all times. If your child is making choices that endanger or cause physical harm to others, we will firstly ensure verbally that the expectations are made clear. We will always communicate these matters directly to parents. In the extremely rare situation that a child has caused unnecessary physical harm to another student or acted in a way that is considered dangerous or highly inappropriate, we will consider the context and may ask parents to



collect the child from school so that they may reflect on their decisions with their parents. We recognise that in Early Years, young children are at a very early stage in their learning journey and any decisions regarding sending students home are taken carefully considering the age of the child, their developmental stage and context of the situation.

MEDICINE AND SUBSTANCES

It is the policy of the school not to administer oral medicines during the school day.

Parents are advised to request their family doctor to prescribe in a way, which avoids the need for medicines to be taken into school. Where this is not possible the guidelines outlined below apply:

- * We offer parents or a parentally nominated person the opportunity to administer medicine during the day to their own child if necessary
- * Each request for administering medicine to students during the school day school will be considered on an individual basis
- * The school will only agree to administer prescribed medication at school in exceptional circumstances
- * Non-prescription medication: We will not administer medicines that have not been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse prescriber or pharmacist prescriber. We are unable to give children aspirin, paracetamol, eye- or ear drops, or medicines containing ibuprofen unless prescribed by a doctor.
- * In case the school agrees to administer prescribed medication, this will only be carried out after parents fill in a medicines form (see attachment) and hand this over to management

When in the exceptional case medication needs to be administered during school time, we ask that the medication comes in its original container from the pharmacy and clearly labelled with:

- * - child's name
- * - name of medicine
- * - how much to give (i.e., dose)
- * - when to be given
- * - any other instructions
- * - a current date

Please ensure that a 'consent to administer' form is signed by the parents (collected from the school reception area) and approved by the school. Without the completion of the Parental Agreement for school to administer medicine the school will not be responsible for the medication and will not be able to administer it. Parents must notify the school in writing of any changes in medication or if their instructions differ from those on the medicine container.

We will store medication in a raised, lockable area and will return it at the end of each day.

For students with Long Term Medical needs or possible needed emergency medication it is important that the school has sufficient information about the medical condition of any child with long term medical needs. A health care plan will be written for children with long term medical needs, involving the parents and relevant health professionals. The school also ensures that relevant staff is aware of the situation.

Asthma: Children who have inhalers should have them available where necessary. Inhalers should be kept in a safe but accessible place. Depending on the needs of the individual, inhalers should be taken to all physical activities. Inhalers must be labelled and include guidelines on administration. The children are expected to be using the inhaler themselves. Our staff does not provide support with using the inhaler.

It is not possible for staff to administer injections unless this is noted on a pre agreed care plan form. In the case of a life threatening situation e.g. use of an EpiPen for a student with anaphylaxis, trained, first aid certificated staff will administer this. Any regular medication needs of your child will be discussed with our school Counsellor and Key Teachers during the induction process so that a care plan and clear protocol can be agreed upon.

Our staff does not perform any medical procedures such as measuring blood or measuring blood sugar in diabetic patients by means of a finger prick. (Please refer to our Medicines policy for further details)



First Aid

We have key members of staff who are first aid trained in all areas of the school including Early Years. They will be our first point of call in the case of medical intervention. Any medical intervention will be reported to parents and of course in the unfortunate incident of child needing further medical care or assistance, we will contact parents immediately.

Each area of the Early Years learning spaces are equipped with first aid kits.

Our classrooms are designed to be enabling for young children so we avoid open plug sockets and use door stop closers to avoid finger injuries in young children.

Hygiene and Sickness in Early Years

Hygiene is paramount to ensure that children are safe and healthy whilst at school. Considering the age and stage of the young children in Early Years, OIS makes commitments to ensuring that appropriate hygiene measures are taken in order to safeguard very young children. This includes:

- * Daily cleaning of the bathroom and toilet areas
- * In case of urinary incontinence using a specialist floor cleaning device immediately to clean soiled areas
- * Soap dispensers are available in all learning areas and in the toilet areas
- * Disposable paper towels are used to wipe hands
- * Designated 'eating' areas are available in the Homeroom and Atelier space to facilitate students on a rolling snack programme. These areas are disinfected and sprayed after and before eating.
- * We do not provide plates or cutlery for children to avoid contamination so please ensure that any lunch products are sent in with necessary eating utensils
- * Students are encouraged to wash hands before and after eating as well as returning from outside areas
- * If accident pertaining to urinary incontinence occur during the school day, students are invited to remove soiled clothes and replace them, themselves using their own spare clothing and hygiene wipes. (please refer to our Safeguarding section in this policy for details of our intimate care planning)

Sickness and Health

Very young children often become unwell – this is normal for the age and stage of an Early Years child as they start school. We ask that you refer to the schools policy on Attendance and Sickness for details of how to confirm absence.

In Early Years, students tend to make more contact with other children and often catch coughs and colds more easily than older students do to their developing immune system and style of working and playing. We ask that you be vigilant about when it is clear that your child is not well enough for school and that the concerns are more than a common cold or a slight cough.


The local children's Health Centres (Consultatie Bureau) have a wealth of information on common childhood sicknesses that are common in under 5's. If you are concerned then please contact your doctor or the JGZ before bringing your child into school.

We want to ensure that all children and staff are well enough for school and to avoid the unnecessary spread of sickness where possible. If your child becomes unwell during the school day then we will make contact with parents and caregivers. Please ensure that all personal contact details are kept up to date on Parro and that you notify the school with any changes to your personal details. We may take your child's temperature using an external thermometer in order to determine if they have a raised temperature.

Rest and Bedtimes

School can be a busy and overwhelming place for young children and sometimes it is clear that your child would benefit from staying at home for a day in order to catch up on sleep and rest. These very occasional moments of rest and recuperation can be beneficial for very young children. Please stay attuned to the needs of your child and seek





guidance from staff if you have concerns that your child is overly exhausted after school. We will guide and support you and your family where we can and can seek guidance from our school Counsellor if needed.

We suggest that where possible, keeping to a secure routine and fixed bedtimes will help support your young child as they transition to school. Whilst at OIS we recognise that compulsory full-time education is a legal requirement at age 5, long periods of absence or too many disruptions to the regular attendance can act as a barrier to your child making progress and thriving in school. Please be mindful when booking holidays or arranging events during school term times. We ask all parents to fill in a leave of absence request form irrelevant of the age of the child.

HEALTHY EATING HABITS

We encourage healthy eating habits at school. We prefer that children do not come into school with chocolate and confectionary in their snack or lunch boxes. We do not allow students to share food with others during the school day. Optimist International School is a nut free school so that we can help keep students and staff with nut allergies safe. This includes cereal bars and nut spreads.

Young children can often be temperamental with food and eating at school can be both an exciting and overwhelming experience for young children. As a child starts school, it may take a few weeks for a regular eating pattern to evolve. If you have any concerns about your child's eating at school, please contact the class teachers. We ask children to send home uneaten food so that parents can see what is being eaten and what is not being eaten.

Good suggestions to encourage healthy eating habits at school with young children are:

- * Involving your child in preparing the food
- * Reduce the number of plastic wrappers so that the food can be easily accessed
- * Avoiding overly large portions - ensuring that they can accomplish eating the full amount
- * Using bento boxes or lunch boxes with sections makes eating food more accomplishable for young children
- * Explaining to your child which part they should eat first
- * Use a thermal container if you wish your child to eat a warm lunch
- * Provide labelled cutlery
- * Get your child to practise opening and closing their own snack and lunch containers
- * Remind your child that if they need to refill their water bottle, they can ask for help at school
- * Use a simple water bottle opening mechanism such as a CamelBak straw rather than a complicated screw top that might get easily spilt

PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT IN EARLY YEARS

Out of respect for all our staff and students, we ask that during the school day, in the school building or using our outside school spaces, parents do not take photographs of students using their own devices. This is also applicable if parents are volunteering, have come to visit a school event or are helping during a field trip. Any group photos will be shared via Parro so that staff can ensure that proper consents are managed for all audiences. If you are invited to an event and photographing is permitted for a specific reason, we ask that you only take photographs of your own child. Some students and staff have chosen to opt out of photographs and we wish to respect their privacy choices.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

We encourage a positive partnership between home and school as this provides consistency and support for our Early Years students. We endeavour to provide an holistic environment where students can grow and be nurtured and this can only be made possible when we have the support and partnership of active parents.

If you are interested in further supporting or volunteering in school, please refer to our volunteer policy or contact the school administration team for ideas on how to become more actively involved.

In order to help each child thrive and to create a steady routine and consistency in school we have asked that families of Early Years students support with some key home/school matters:



Birthdays

If your child is celebrating a birthday, they are welcome to bring in a child sized small, healthy treat such as raisins or fruit kebabs. We prefer things that are wrapped for ease so that when they are handed out, they may fit in another child's bag.

It is not appropriate for children to bring party bags with excessive gifts as we prefer all children have equal treatment for their birthdays. We do not have the facilities to prepare food or chop large cakes into pieces. Any food that is sent in must clearly have the ingredients labelled so that we can monitor students with allergies. If you prefer that your child does not participate in sharing birthday treats, please indicate this to your child's class teachers.

We send all birthday treats home with the child so that other parents can decide what to let their children access and when. We celebrate by singing to your child in class, making a birthday crown and letting the child have an element of choice in the classroom such as choosing a book or song for the class to engage in.

Self-Care

Before starting school, we expected all children to be fully toilet trained. Children should be able to recognise when they need to go to the toilet, to wipe themselves properly and to know that they must wash their hands when they have used the bathroom.

We recognise that young children often have accidents when they are immersed in play and can become overwhelmed. We ask that all children bring in a spare pair of clothes including underwear to school so that your child can change themselves if needed. If your child is still struggling to regulate themselves when they use the toilet we ask that you discuss this with your child's teacher so we can make an individual plan of action that suits your child, if necessary, in consultation with our School Counsellor. This might be that your child reduces the number of hours at school or that we ask that you begin working on toilet training at home again before re-starting school. Please note that we are unable to wipe your child in intimate places or manage regular soiling accidents at school.

Toys from home

We ask that children leave toys from home, at home. This is to avoid breakages or upset. If your child uses a comforter toy in order to help them transition to school, we ask that you manage a morning routine with your child that ensures that the toy goes back home in the morning.

Clothing

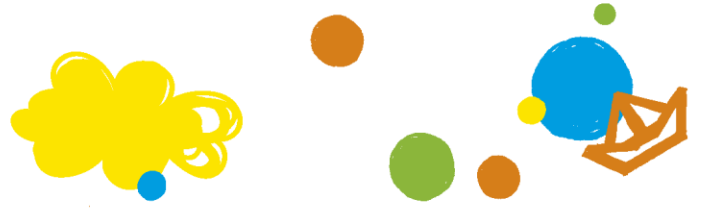
Students are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing to school that enables them to be independent. Clothing with simple zip, Velcro or popper functions are easier for your child to manage than clothing with many buttons or fastenings that cannot easily be managed by your child. Trainers with Velcro straps are ideal shoes for this age group. We prefer no slip-on shoes or shoes with no back part – this is to ensure that children do not slip over.

We ask all parents to supply a pair of clearly labelled welly boots that stay in school. This is so that we can enable the children to play outside in wet conditions without making their regular footwear too wet. We ask that fancy dress, party dress or overly frilly clothing is avoided as in Early Years we often work with messy learning materials such as paint and prefer not to damage delicate clothing. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum. Please bear in mind the Dutch seasonality. It is advisable to prepare for 'all weathers' especially during Autumn and Spring months.

Morning dropping off

Early Years students are dropped off at the main gate (Gate 1) closest to the Early Years classrooms. We encourage you to create your own familiar 'goodbye' routine. We stipulate that unless your child is just starting school, is in an induction period or is experiencing a specific or challenging moment, that you say 'goodbye' before your child enters the building. This ensures that students can get busy with their learning on arrival at school and avoids distress for other children when too many parents are present in the classroom at the start of the day.





There are many moments planned into the school year where parents are invited to share and celebrate learning with their child, inside the school building. We encourage parents to participate in these events and join in with any invitations.

Authorisation for picking up

Students in Early Years can be collected from the front playground. Each class will assemble next to Gate 1. We ask that each child says 'goodbye' to their class teacher before going with their trusted adult or after school care provider. Please wait until the class is fully assembled in the meeting place, before attempting to take your child home so that we can carefully monitor the children as they leave the school.

We ask that you clearly verbalise to your child, any alterations to after-school collection arrangements before they come to school. Young children can be particularly sensitive and if things change unexpectedly during the day, so please ensure that any last-minute alterations are entered into Parro so that we can explain this to your child in a timely manner. If your child attends a club after school then again, please explain the alterations and expectations before arriving to school. It is useful if you give a quick reminder to your child at drop off too.

Bedtimes and Routines

Young children tire easily and we recommend to all parents to pay special attention to creating regular bedtimes and fixed routines. At school, we have no facilities to support 'napping' and so, before children start full time school, we advise all families to ensure that daytime napping is either left for weekends or is gently phased out.

Lateness

Please ensure that you drop your child off between 8:00 and 8:15 in the morning and collect promptly at 14:30. We monitor lateness carefully as this can affect not just one's own child but other children in the class and the speed of which we can start the school day.

Support

If for any reason you as a family experience challenges with your child or need further advice with parenting matters, please talk to your child's teacher for suggestions or make contact with our school counsellor where we can work together to help in the best ways.

SCHOOL TRIPS

School trips in Early Years will always take into account the young age of the children. Where possible, local trips will be made. Any trips will directly make links to the unit of learning and enhance the learning experience. Where needed we may ask for parents to support us on these trips.


Staff will ensure that a full risk assessment has been done beforehand to ensure the suitability of the venue and the potential for clear learning links. Where possible we choose to leave trips that are a further distance away until the latter part of the academic year so that the classes have time to establish themselves in familiar settings first. (Please refer to our School Trip and excursions policy for further details)

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WELLBEING

Building and developing secure and sustained relationships with others is the key foundation in all Early Years teaching.

During every moment of the day, young children navigate a host of interpersonal interactions with others and develop new skills. Each child is unique and every student is on their own learning journey as they explore, develop and make progress with their own personal, social and emotional learning skills. Supporting children to make progress with their personal, social and emotional development is integral in all that we do in Early Years as we closely observe, respond and evaluate children in their moments of play.





In addition, we also teach explicit skills and themes using our Jigsaw scheme which is a whole school PSHE programme. All students across the school follow specific themed topics which culminate in collective assemblies.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Physical development of young children refers to both the way in which a child's body develops and how a young child uses their body to navigate their way around spaces and interact with the world. It also refers to a child's ability to exercise positive self-care practises and to stay healthy. Health, wellbeing and self-care are integral to physical development. During the school day, children have access to different learning experiences that help them develop both fine and gross motor skills and are supported and guided about good self-care practises.

At OIS, students have two Physical Education lessons taught by specialist teachers. We use outdoor spaces to enhance the learning environment to support develop key skills such as navigating around wider or more open spaces, collaborative games and engaging in sensory play.

In our Early Years environment, we encourage children to take ownership and responsibility for their self-care needs such as blowing their own noses, wiping themselves after using the bathroom, knowing when to wash their hands, putting on and off clothing and how to stay safe when using different equipment. Some students need more guidance and we will always offer suggestions and ideas for parents to help support their child as they develop more control and ownership over their own physical wellbeing.

We recommend attending all invitations for the Consultatie Bureau clinics. These Dutch health clinic check-ups are useful in keeping track of your child's development. Staff might recommend additional checks such as hearing and eyesight check-ups. Please ensure that you regularly visit a dentist and that your child keeps up to date with vaccinations.

INTERNATIONAL EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM (IEYC)

In our Early Years, we use the International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC) to help guide and nurture our young students during their first year at school. More information can be found <https://fieldworkeducation.com/curriculums/early-years>.

This exposure to IEYC supports children as they transition to IPC later in Group 2.

The International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC) is a child-centred and research informed curriculum for 2-5+ year olds. The IEYC recognises best practice and the developmental needs of early years education and enables teacher and practitioners to embrace the interconnected nature of learning.

Emphasising playful, holistic and child-focused approaches to learning and development, it provides a contemporary perspective that empowers teachers as they help children learn effectively and with enjoyment.

During the school day, the students access different learning opportunities, linked to our IEYC units. These thematic units provide a context for the learning and cover all areas of learning and are underpinned by four key Learning Strands:

- * Independence and Interdependence
- * Communicating
- * Enquiring
- * Healthy Living and Physical Wellbeing

Each strand represents an International Dimension that reflects the school community that the children learn in.



The strand of Independence and Interdependence is further divided into eight personal learning goals:

- * Thinker = I can ask questions / I can find out when where what why how
- * Adaptable = I can try new things
- * Resilient = I can try again / I never give up
- * Collaborator = I can work together / I can take turns / I can share / I help
- * Communicator = I can listen / I can say/show
- * Respectful = I am caring / I can agree and disagree / I can look after my things / I can tidy up
- * Empathetic = I can celebrate / I think before I do
- * Ethical = I make the right choice

The strand of **Communication** is broken down into:

- * Speaking and Listening
- * Reading
- * Writing
- * Number
- * Shape and Measures
- * ICT and Computing
- * Expressive Arts and Creativity

Children are free to engage in the different, planned learning areas in the classroom and we use our Atelier Space to lead IEYC activities that challenge students and help them to learn new skills and embed knowledge concepts.

SPECIALIST LESSONS IN THE EARLY YEARS

In order to minimise transitions for our youngest students we gently introduce new spaces and try to keep the majority of the learning in a familiar setting. We carefully plan the timetable to ensure that all Early Years children attend specialist lessons on the same day so that if they are learning in the Atelier or their Homeroom space, they may simply join in with the lesson without having to reconvene as a large group first.

The children are collected or walked by the Early Years team to the Braambos or Boskern for PE lessons. Music lessons take place primarily within the Early Years environment. As the student's grow in confidence, they may start to take lessons in the Music Room.

Dutch specialist teachers visit the students in their learning spaces and teach alongside the students as they play. During these lessons, all staff switch the language of learning to Dutch so that students see in parallel the use of the Dutch language in their familiar environment. Dutch teachers take a small collective moment to teach specific language or concepts to the whole class during these lessons.

Children may visit our school library in person or may take home library books from our visiting Early Years library where our volunteers and staff come into the classroom with a selection of books that have been carefully chosen to appear to young children.

ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS

Staff continuously observe and monitor the progress of students in the moment. The learning foci and activities are planned for weekly and the Early Years teaching team uses a Yearly overview of the IEYC units and objectives in order to ensure that depth and appropriate coverage of learning objectives has been made. Each child reaches developmental milestones at different stages and every child is unique.

Staff collect examples of each child's individual learning journey to build up a portfolio of a child's Early Years learning experience. Staff use this physical work, classroom observations, photos and professional discussions to help them plan for the next steps in a child's learning path and to document the key progress children make. At the end of their time in Early Years, parents will receive these portfolios. After each IEYC unit, children will be sent home with their IEYC unit specific work in a small portfolio.





There are 52 IEYC Learning Outcomes that students work towards throughout their time in Early Years. Each outcome is broad and these portfolios represent a fraction of a child's unique journey towards achieving these outcomes. Each outcome is underpinned by smaller and more specific learning outcomes that are experienced through their exploration and engagement in the IEYC.

Throughout their journey, children will work both on 8 IEYC Personal Goals as part of the strand of independence and Interdependence. Opportunities to explore these personal goals are embedded throughout all the units but we will focus bi weekly on one object in particular to help children embed the language and recognise moments where they have exemplified these skills.

We assess children once per year on their attitudes to them self and school (PASS). This helps us plan for their social and emotional needs and informs planning.

Staff link up planning with assessment tools to carefully monitor the needs of each child so that they are aware of what the child's next steps are in their learning and what knowledge and skills they are mastering. As they get older and more settled, children are able to share in their own learning journey and become more aware of what they are working on and at what stage of their learning journey they are in. This is different for every child as all children are unique and work at their own pace.

