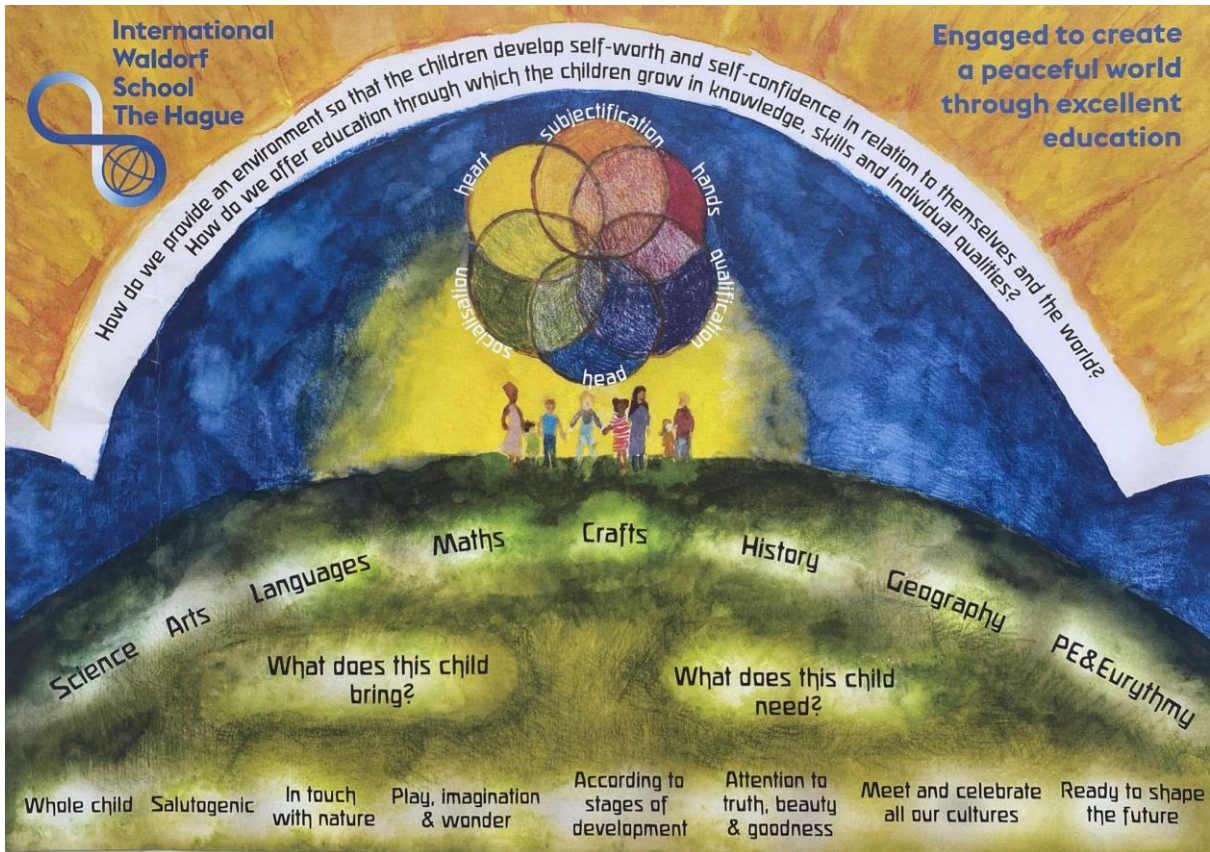


School Guide

IWSTH

International Waldorf School The Hague

2023 - 2024



Dear Parent(s),

We would like to welcome you and your child to the International Waldorf School The Hague. The school guide that follows provides practical and necessary information that will be useful throughout the school year. For some families, starting at a new school can be overwhelming, but finding a routine will help you and your child adjust.

As always, we are here to answer your questions and provide support in this time of transition.

Warm regards,

Rodette van Dunné, *School principal*

2023 - 2024

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1. About us

Our history

Waldorf Schools¹ are inspired by the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the founder of anthroposophy. Following World War I, he committed himself to encourage social renewal that would free people from wage slavery. Steiner gave many lectures addressing the social problems of the time, one of which was given for the workers at the Waldorf-Astoria factory.

During this lecture, he proposed the concept of keeping children in school longer to enable them to have more opportunities in life.

This caught the imagination of the listeners who were present. They wanted a school like that for their children.

Emil Molt, the director of the factory, supported this idea and asked Steiner to lead a school for the children of his labourers. This marked the beginning of the Waldorf School, called the Freie Waldorfschule, in 1919 in Stuttgart.

The school grew rapidly and became better known through the years. During a conference at the Gymnasium Haganum in The Hague in 1922, Rudolf Steiner spoke, and several listeners decided to establish a school just like that in The Hague. In 1923, the first children gathered in a living room in Columbusstraat. It became the first Waldorf School in The Netherlands, called "de Vrijeschool".

Until the 1960s, there were only ten Waldorf schools in the Netherlands. In the 1970s and 1980s, the movement grew explosively and now there are nearly 100 Waldorf schools with 19 000 students.

Beyond Germany and The Netherlands, Waldorf Schools were first built in Scandinavian countries and the UK, followed by countries like the United States on other continents. Waldorf schools can now be found throughout the world.

¹ Waldorf schools in the Netherlands are called "Vrijeschool", which means "free school". In some countries, schools have chosen to use the name Steiner school. They all take inspiration from the same source. In this document, we will use the term Waldorf School. However, wherever Vrijeschool is part of the name of a Dutch organisation, we will refer to the organisation as it is named.

Our story

Over the past decades, The Hague has become the international capital for Justice and Peace, host to the International Court of Justice, Eurojust and OPCW. Many large multinational companies have chosen to establish their main office in this beautiful city. In 2017, we recognised a clear demand for an International Waldorf School where our pedagogy could be made available to non-Dutch-speaking children who move across the world with their parents. After a thorough study, we were granted permission (and funding) by the Ministry of Education in The Netherlands to establish the school.

2. Mission and vision

Core mission

Our school is open to all children who are enrolled by their parents. We ask the parents to make a conscious decision for the education that the school stands for (see core values). It is our aim to support students to become independent, free-thinking people who can actively participate in society, according to their own abilities. We aim to help them to develop their basic skills: knowledge as well as artistic, physical and social skills, and stimulate them to develop their own problem-solving abilities.

Core values

- We take our inspiration from Anthroposophy. We strive towards education where Waldorf pedagogy becomes neither a theoretical system, nor a collection of outer methods, but a wellspring of living insight.
- Healthy child development unfolds most fully in the context of a community with healthy social relationships among parents, teachers and children.
- Each child is treated with loving interest and acceptance.

3. Contact information

Our contact information

International Waldorf School The Hague

2e Messstraat 31

2586 XA The Hague

T +31 70 7830030

E info@iwsth.org

W www.iwsth.org

For questions regarding billing: financial@iwsth.org

Our location

The International Waldorf School is situated close to the beach and the dunes. We are also within walking distance of the Westbroekpark.

4. Our team

Staff members

School principal: Rodette van Dunné (r.vandunne@iwsth.org)

Learning Support Coordinator: Helen Claus (ib@iwsth.org)

Admissions and administrative coordinator: Sarah Mann (info@iwsth.org)

Public relations: Paulus van Veen (pr@iwsth.org)

Concierge: Kyril Herkelman (k.herkelman@iwsth.org)

Kindergarten teachers

The Mapletree Kindergarten teachers: Jocelyn Roy (j.roy@iwsth.org) and Evridiki Liaskou (e.liaskou@iwsth.org)

The Willowtree Kindergarten teachers: Katarina Cmarec (k.cmarec@iwsth.org) and Evridiki Liaskou (e.liaskou@iwsth.org)

Kindergarten teaching assistant: Kranthi Daddanala

Primary school class teachers

Class 1 teacher: Georgia Carmichael (g.carmichael@iwsth.org)

Class 2 teachers: Lisbeth Pao (l.pao@iwsth.org) and Tristan Cozens (t.cozens@iwsth.org)

Class 3 teachers: Caroline Kaptein (Kapteinc.kaptein@iwsth.org) and Tristan Cozens (t.cozens@iwsth.org)

Class 4 and 5 teacher: Victor Ray (v.ray@iwsth.org)

Class 6 teacher: Lindie van Jaarsveld (l.vanjaarsveld@iwsth.org)

Specialist teachers

Dutch teacher: Serena Hillenaar (s.hillenaar@iwsth.org)

Handwork teacher: Anne Oberhofer (a.oberhofer@iwsth.org)

Eurythmy teacher: Anne Oberhofer (a.oberhofer@iwsth.org)

Gym teacher: Christian Javier (gym@iwsth.org)

English as Additional Language teacher: Heather Bezuidenhout (h.bezuidenhout@iwsth.org)

5. School hours

Entering the building

You will be able to enter the building in two ways. You may go through the main entrance on 2e Messtraat 31, or you can go around to the back of the building by entering the playground from Rotterdamsestraat 42.

Primary school classes

Children in primary school classes 1-5 are to be dropped off on the playground at 08:25. They may not yet proceed to their classes, but should go straight to the playground with their bags and other belongings. Their teacher will welcome them there and take them to their classes when the bell is rung at 8:35.

Class 6 may enter the building from 8:25 onwards. They may independently go to their classroom, where their teacher will welcome them.

All primary school classes are dismissed at 15:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. On Wednesdays, the children are dismissed at 12:30. Parents may collect their children in front of the school building.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten children are to be dropped off on the kindergarten playground between 08:30 and 08:40, where their teacher will wait for them to take them inside. Monday to Friday at 15:30 the kindergarten children will be waiting to be picked up by their parent/afterschool care/afterschool activity teacher on the wall of the kindergarten playground. On Wednesdays, pick-up time is at 12:30.

6. School grounds

Playground

The playground has been turned into a green space with bushes, a vegetable garden and flowerbeds. There is a large sandpit, two play structures, fences and structures built from willow branches. As the playground evolves, more possibilities to explore nature will become available. The children can run around and climb at their free will when a teacher or staff member is on duty (before school from 8:25 and during playtime in the school day). For safety reasons, children are not allowed to climb on any equipment after school, as there are no teachers on duty at that time.

There is also an area on the playground for the children to store their bikes.

Lost and found

The school has a lost and found box, where you are able to collect things that have been left behind. Small objects, like keys or jewellery, will be kept in the office. Everything unclaimed will be brought to charity twice a year.

7. Parent involvement

School app: Parro

For effective communication, we use a school app named Parro. This way we can communicate easily and safely and share day to day and weekly information with you as parents.

When your child is enrolled, you will receive an invitation from the administration to download the app, together with a short introduction on how it works. We use the Parro application as our main communication tool. Each class teacher will share important announcements and newsletters via Parro. Also, the parent meetings will be planned through Parro. We expect all parents to be updated.

Communication about illness

If your child is sick or has other reasons for not coming to school, please mark them absent on Parro and state the reason for your child's absence. The teacher will be able to read your message in the morning.

Email

We use email to share practical information only. This is not the appropriate medium to use for non-practical (emotional) discussions, so please avoid using email for that purpose. If you have specific comments or complaints, please contact the relevant teacher by email to make an appointment so that you can talk to them in person.

Newsletter

Every two months, you will receive a school newsletter via Parro with information on school policies or reports of events that will or have taken place.

Parent meetings

Parent-teacher meetings are held in October and March. The purpose of these ten-minute meetings is for parents to hear about their child's development and to address any questions or concerns they might have.

You are always welcome to make an appointment with the teacher should you have something to discuss outside the parent-teacher meetings.

Parent evenings

Two evenings a year, teachers will invite all parents to come to the school for a parent evening. During these meetings, the teacher will share updates on the class and sometimes hold a discussion about a particular relevant topic. The teacher may also lead the group in planning and preparing for celebrations or discussing practical issues in the class. These parent evenings also help foster school community and strengthen connections amongst parents in the class.

Parent association

Waldorf schools are known for their lively parent community. Several parents of our school took the initiative to start a parent association. They help the school to support and organise activities for the parent community.

Volunteers

Volunteers are also very welcome at our school. We always need extra hands to help with things like gardening, class assistance, office work, etc. Please contact us if you would like to volunteer.

Festivals and celebrations

Seasonal festivals have a special place in the Waldorf curriculum. We celebrate four festivals as a school each year. Because these festivals are a shared experience – with parents, teachers and children – we often invite parents to help organise these festivals.

Since we are an international school and we welcome children and parents from various backgrounds, we also invite you to share with us the festivals from your home country. We will be

creating opportunities throughout the year for families to share festivities, rituals and holidays from their home countries. Please talk to your child's class teacher to find out more.

8. Learning support

All children at our school are carefully monitored. Several developmental areas are observed: cognitive, physical, social and emotional. If necessary, a child's development will be discussed with the learning support coordinator.

When we see that a child needs extra support, this will initially be offered by the teacher in his/her own class. This is part of what we offer in class and is discussed with the parents during parent meetings.

When a child needs additional guidance, the school does the following:

1. We discuss the situation with the parents
2. We discuss the situation with the support team
3. We explore possibilities to have further research done

For these discussions or investigations, we always ask parental permission. If we feel that extra help is needed, we will make our best effort to search for the ideal solution to support your child.

The International Waldorf School The Hague is a small school for children with an international background. We have small classes so that we can make sure that the children develop optimally.

As a small school we have little overhead. Unfortunately, at this moment, we are not in the position to organise extra support for children with special needs. Therefore, we do not have teachers with the specific qualifications that are needed to address those on a different spectrum of special educational needs.

Always address specific questions regarding your child with his/her class teacher.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At the International Waldorf School of the Hague, we are committed to supporting the needs of all children, and this includes providing English language support to our multilingual learners. The English as an Additional Language (EAL) programme has been designed to support non-native English-speaking students from kindergarten to Class 6.

Our primary goal is to ensure that children are confident and successful in their language acquisition, so that they can develop socially as well as academically. This is achieved with contextual-based learning by being exposed to a broad range of topics based on their interests and the world around them.

Children in our EAL programme will always be made to feel proud of their culture and language, and their ability to be able to work in more than one language is treated as an asset that enhances their development.

School readiness

When a child approaches the age 5 or 6, they may be ready to move on from kindergarten into the first class. At this point, we make an assessment about school readiness through the lens of the child's development. Waldorf educators' caution, as compared with other educational streams, grows out of a commitment to each child, with the goal that he or she enters grade school confidently and experiences success and satisfaction academically, socially and emotionally. In other words, we stand with the parents in wanting what is best for the child for all the educational years ahead. School entry needs to be a carefully considered decision.

In January, we hold a special meeting about school readiness and how Waldorf schools approach this transition. At the meeting, we will explain which steps are made in preparing your child to go to the first grade. Your questions on this topic are always welcome.

9. School agreements

Agreements on behaviour

These agreements exist to ensure that each child experiences a safe and happy environment at school. This means that we expect a certain kind of behaviour from each member of the community. Respect for one another, each other's background and personal belongings are a few of the most important things in a community. At our school we support each other in our words and actions, work together, and do not exclude others. Each person is valuable, and we can appreciate all individuals' strengths and weaknesses, talents and challenges. We care about each other's physical

and emotional safety, and we listen and communicate in a respectful way. To support this, our team works with a programme called *The Four Pillars of Wellbeing* by The Contentment Foundation (<https://www.contentment.org>).

Diversity statement

In our work with children, we are committed to the ideals upon which Waldorf/Steiner education was founded. These include respect for the dignity of each individual child and family in honouring the diverse aspects which form the background of their lives, including their race, culture, religion, national origin, socioeconomic situation, gender identity and sexual orientation, family composition, and individual ability. Waldorf education is committed to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion as a pathway to social justice and to rectify the explicit and implicit biases that undermine creation of healthy social life in our society.

Waldorf education was founded in 1919 upon the insights of Rudolf Steiner, whose indications provide the foundations for a truly humanised education that recognizes the individuality of each person and the universal spirit living within every human being. We affirm this educational and social truth. Any statements attributed to Rudolf Steiner which imply or suggest discrimination or judgment toward any race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality, or socio-economic group, are rejected. Such attitudes are contradictory and undermining to the goals of this education.

Working toward these goals requires committed inner work from the adults who care for our children. Teacher preparation and professional deepening call for each educator to engage in self-reflection that will ennoble inner attitudes to support diversity, inclusion and equity. Recognizing and celebrating the differences that make us uniquely individual fosters healing and creation of new social life. We strive to create conscious, collaborative communities of parents, teachers and children, which strengthen the children in our care to meet future challenges with optimism, confidence, resilience and tolerance, and experience their lives as filled with purpose and meaning.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices

Children are encouraged not to bring mobile phones to school. If a mobile phone is necessary for safety reasons (e.g. a child who travels to school on his/her own), then the phone must be switched off at school and remain in pupils' bags. In case of violation of this rule, telephones will be confiscated and can be retrieved by the child's parent or guardian at the end of the day.

Parent use of mobile phones on the school grounds is discouraged except for in urgent situations.

Filming or photographing in and around the school is forbidden without permission from the school management.

Smart watches with games, Sim cards and/or internet access are not permitted at school. If a child wears such a watch to school, they will be asked to switch it off and store it in their bags.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the school premises.

Rules on the playground

To keep our playgrounds clean and our garden plants healthy, we ask that you dispose of your trash in the appropriate receptacles.

Dogs are not permitted on school grounds. Dogs who are with parents at drop-off or pick-up time in front of the school need to be leashed and handled by an adult.

For safety reasons, children may not play with balls before or after school. Ball play is reserved for break and playtimes.

Rules in the hallways

We keep our voices low in the hallway so as not to disturb the other classrooms. We always walk through the hallways, instead of running. Running is reserved for the gym and playground. Ball throwing is also meant for the gym and playground, and balls should be held still while moving through the rest of the school building.

Birthday treats

A child's birthday is a special event. We would like to honour your child on his or her birthday in an appropriate way. Please coordinate with your child's teacher beforehand, as each teacher determines their own way in which birthdays will be celebrated in the class. We encourage parents

to prepare a small and healthy treat to share with the class. Candy is not allowed during school time, both in the building and on the playground.

Toys from home

Toys from home are not permitted, as they are a distraction inside the classroom. We provide our children with plenty of well-sought, Waldorf play materials. If your child would be comforted by a small doll or cuddly toy when first starting school, we will make an exception.

10. School holidays

School year 2023 – 2024

The municipality makes agreements with the Hague Regional school boards about the school holidays.

Study day	Monday, September 18 th
Prinsjesdag	Tuesday, September 19 th
Autumn holiday	Monday, October 16 th to Friday, October 20 th
Sinterklaas	December 5 th , children free from 12:00
Christmas break starts	December 21 st , children free from 10:30
Study days	February 14 th , 15 th and 16 th , children free
Spring break	Monday, February 19 th to Friday, February 23 rd
Good Friday	Friday, March 29 th
Easter	Monday, April 1 st
May break	Monday, April 29 th to Friday, May 10 th
Ascension	Thursday, May 9 th and Friday, May 10 th
Whitsun	Monday, May 20 th
Study days	Monday, July 1 st and Tuesday, July 2 nd
Summer holiday	Monday, July 15 th to Friday, August 18 th

11. Attendance

From the day that your child becomes 5 years of age, he/she is bound by the law on compulsory education and obliged to be in school during every school day. The only reasons for absence are

sickness or authorised absence. In cases of unauthorised absence, the school is obliged to inform the city council's compulsory education officer. This protocol sets out how the school deals with this.

Authorised absence

Procedure 'Absence through sickness'

The school should be informed of every absence due to illness, at least on the first school day of the sickness. You should report this on Parro or send an email to the school that your child is ill before 09:00, with the child's name and class. The email should be sent to: info@iwsth.org

- If the absence is longer than three days, the school will contact the parents to discuss the situation and to explain the school policy.
- If a child is absent for longer than two days without any notification of sickness, the procedure 'suspected unauthorised absence' will be activated (see below).

Doctor's statement

1. A doctor's statement is required if your child is absent for longer than 10 days.
2. A doctor's statement is also required if a child has been absent due to illness more than four times in a year. This should be submitted after the fourth sickness absence.
3. If no doctor's statement has been submitted, you will be asked to contact the school doctor.

Exceptions to the law on compulsory education

Parents of children who are bound by the law on compulsory education are obliged to adhere to the set holiday periods. Taking extra time off, going on extended vacations, or going on holiday during school time is not permitted. This is explained in the law on compulsory education.

Sometimes an exception may be made. You can submit your request for absence by filling in the request-for-absence form. A request for absence should be made at least 4 weeks in advance of the requested absence.

Profession of parents

Additional leave can be requested if a child, because of the profession of (one of) the parents, cannot go on holiday with them for periods of 2 consecutive weeks within the regular school holidays. This needs to be supported by written evidence. The leave should not be longer than 10

school days per school year and may not be in the first 2 weeks of the school year. If the family has already had a joint holiday, no more leave can be requested in that school year.²

Attention: requests for leave based on professional activities are seldom granted because providing proof is very complex. Please ensure that you submit your request well in time.

Religious reasons

For celebrations or obligations based on religion or religious beliefs, special leave may be requested. In this case, a notification by the parents, at least 2 days before the day of absence, is sufficient. Absence will be granted for 1 day per occasion.

Important circumstances

Important circumstances (art. 11g of the law on compulsory education) are exceptional circumstances that occur outside the parents and/or child's control that prevents the child from attending school. If it is less than 10 school days, the school director can decide to grant the leave. If it is for more than 10 days, the compulsory education officer decides. Every school has its own compulsory education officer.

Kindergarten attendance

For some children in kindergarten a whole week of school can be tiring, especially in the beginning. For those children, we will permit up to 5 hours of rest at home until their 6th birthday.³ For these 5 hours, you are not required to request permission, but you must inform the school principal. If your child has a need for this, you could extend the exemption with a maximum of 5 hours extra. You have to be granted permission for this by the school principal, who will consult the teacher and the special needs coordinator to come to a decision. Keep in mind that it is in the interest of your child that he/she gets used to a full school week as soon as possible.

Unauthorised absence

If your child is not at school without having a valid reason, a notification of suspected unauthorised absence will be sent to the compulsory education officer through the automated registration system

² art. 11f of the law on compulsory education, see also <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/leerplicht/vraag-en-antwoord/leerplicht-schoolvakanties>

³ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/leerplicht/vraag-en-antwoord/leerplicht-kind-niet-naar-school>

of the city council. The compulsory education officer may start an investigation and even produce a warrant. This measure may lead to a fine.

Suspected unauthorised absence

If a child is not in school and the reason for absence is not known, then there is suspected unauthorised absence. The school deals with this as follows:

Enquiry

If a student fails to come to school on time and no notification of sickness has been received before 09.00, the absence coordinator will contact the parents.

- If the child is sick, the procedure 'Absence due to illness' will be followed.
- If the child is late, the 'Lateness procedure' will be followed.
- If there is no valid reason for absence, the notification of suspected unauthorised absence will be entered into the automated registration system of the city council. You will be informed by email of this on the same day and will receive an explanation of the absence protocol.
- If a child does not appear at school for the second day without a valid reason, the parents will be invited to the school for a meeting. This meeting should take place within 5 school days from the first day of absence.
- If, from the meeting, there are problems in the family situation, the teacher and internal consultant will be informed to find a suitable solution together. The compulsory education officer will also be informed.

Procedure 'Lateness Procedure'

Regularly arriving late at school is a form of unauthorised absence. The absence protocol below is based on the Methodical Approach School Absence (MAS) of The Hague city council.

3-6-9-12 Late regulation

3: Late at school three times in a month: The teacher will speak to the parents and the parents receive a letter.

6: Late at school six times in a month: The director will send parents a letter. In this letter, the parents are informed that 9 times late will result in a notification to the compulsory education officer.

9: Late at school nine times in a month: The school will notify the Compulsory Education Officer. The parents will be informed of this in writing referring to the number of times absent. The compulsory education officer will send the parents a warning letter or may decide to invite the parents for a meeting.

12: Late at school twelve times in a month: The school will again notify the Compulsory Education Officer. The parents have then already received a warning letter and are invited to a meeting by the compulsory education officer. The compulsory education officer may issue a warrant.

NB: The absence lists are processed at the end of the month. Therefore, you will not receive a letter from the teacher immediately after your child has been late 3 times, or more. The letters are sent as soon as possible and will include the amount of times of being late. If your child has been late 3, 4 or 5 times, you will receive a letter from the teacher with the number of 'lates'. If your child has been late 6, 7 or 8 times, you will receive a letter from the director. If your child has been late more than 9 times, you will receive notification that the information has been sent to the compulsory education officer.

12. Food and beverages

Meals in the kindergarten

On Mondays, children in the kindergarten bring in their own healthy snack and lunch from home. From Tuesdays until Fridays, the school provides all meals (snack and lunch) for kindergarten children.

Snack and lunch in the primary school

Children in the primary school bring in their own healthy snack and lunch from home, as well as a water bottle. Children will eat their meals in their classroom under the supervision of the teacher. As chores are a chance to learn responsibility, children will tidy up afterwards.

13. Waldorf education

A brief overview of the Waldorf curriculum

The table below provides a brief overview of the Waldorf curriculum.

CLASS	STORY CONTENT: HISTORY & LITERATURE	ARITHMETIC & MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE & GEOGRAPHY	ENGLISH & GRAMMAR
KINDERGARTEN	Traditional fairy tales and nature stories.	Concepts introduced in a natural way in practical life, e.g. through baking, sorting or playing.	Activities and stories related to the four seasons. Activities with natural materials. Nature walks. Gardening & cooking.	Aural skills & vocabulary developed through stories, verses and songs.
CLASS 1	Fairy tales and seasonal stories.	Quality of numbers; Roman numerals; counting; whole numbers; the four processes (add, subtract, multiply and divide).	Nature and environmental studies. Gardening & cooking.	Pictorial introduction to the alphabet; speech exercises; phonics; vowels; simple words; beginning to write and read.
CLASS 2	Animal fables. Legends and stories that highlight ethical human behaviour.	The four processes; multiplication tables; place value; time.	Nature and environmental studies. Gardening & cooking.	Phonics; writing and reading.
CLASS 3	Old Testament stories.	Extended work with the four processes, including regrouping; measurement; money.	Farming; traditional occupations; where our food & clothes come from; cycles of the year; practical building work; gardening.	Spelling; writing and reading; basic grammar.
CLASS 4	Norse mythology. Local history.	Introduction to fractions; long division; finding factors and multiples.	Zoology (human beings & animals). Local geography. Map-making and compass directions.	Spelling; writing and reading; grammar.
CLASS 5	Ancient India, Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Persia, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece.	Decimals, fractions and mixed numbers. Freehand geometry.	Botany. The regions and physical geography of the Netherlands and Europe.	Spelling; reading; writing in a variety of styles and for different purposes; grammar.
CLASS 6	Ancient Rome; the Crusades; Medieval history.	Business maths (percentages, discounts, interest, etc.). Geometrical drawings and constructions.	Geology & mineralogy; physics (sound, light, magnetism, heat, static electricity); astronomy.	Spelling; reading; writing across the curriculum; writing in a variety of different styles and for different purposes; grammar.

In addition to the above, children also do arts, crafts, handwork, form drawing, music, Eurythmy, Dutch and Physical Education. More detailed information about the curriculum can be found on our school website. You can also speak to your child's class teacher if you have any questions.

Story material within the Waldorf curriculum

During the course of their primary school careers, children are exposed to a wide range of literature. In Class One, the children hear many fairy tales. These include Grimm's fairy tales, but also traditional tales from around the world. In Class Two, children hear animal fables, as well as stories

that highlight ethical human behaviour. Old Testament stories are told in Class Three, whereas Norse myths are told in Class Four. In Class Five and Six, children journey through the worlds of Ancient Egypt, Ancient India, Ancient Persia, Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. Thus, by the time children reach Class Six, they would have heard many creation stories and would have been exposed to the belief systems of many different cultures. This helps children to see how human thinking has evolved over time. It also teaches children that we are all different and have different beliefs. It helps children to form their own views and to develop a deeper understanding and respect for people from all around the world.

Social and emotional well-being

The social and emotional well-being of the children at our school are important to us. For this reason, we offer The Four Pillars programme from The Contentment Foundation to all the children in our school. The four pillars include mindfulness, community, self-curiosity and contentment. The programme provides scientifically-evidenced, philosophically grounded practices that promote safe, loving and healthy school climates. For more information, please visit contentment.org.

Seasonal festivals

Seasonal festivals have a special place in the Waldorf curriculum. During seasonal festivals, we celebrate the cycle of the year and our connection to nature. Children will cherish these celebrations and recall them throughout their lives as precious memories.

At The International Waldorf School The Hague, we celebrate four festivals as a school each year.

These include:

The Michaelmas and Harvest celebration,

The Advent & Christmas celebration,

The Whitsun & Diversity celebration,

The Summer & St John's celebration.

Although these festivals have a Christian origin and background, we do not focus on the religious aspects of these festivals at our school. At Michaelmas, we tell stories about knights taming dragons, which teach children that they can overcome their own struggles and battles. At Christmas

time, we focus on coming together as a community, whilst singing both secular Christmas songs as well as more traditional Christmas carols. At Whitsun, the children dance around a Maypole – a celebration which is believed to have started in Roman Britain around 2000 years ago. On this day, we also celebrate the diverse cultures and backgrounds within our school. At the Summer & St John's celebration, the primary school children jump over a small fire (a highlight of the year for many), which signifies leaving behind the past and embracing the future. The children also make crowns from grass and fresh flowers, to celebrate the wonderful Summer season. These festivals bring a predictable rhythm to the year, which is important for children. The festivals also help us to build our school community and to foster positive relationships with one another.

In addition, during the course of the year, class teachers celebrate many other festivals within their individual classes. Teachers make an effort to incorporate festivals and celebrations from the children in their own classes in order to acknowledge and celebrate the traditions to which the individual children in their classes belong. These may include the Chinese New Year, Diwali or Eid. Children are invited and encouraged to share their own beliefs and cultures with the rest of the class, and much emphasis is placed on our wonderful diversity and on treating each other with courtesy and respect.

More information on the seasonal festivals can be found on our school website.

Adventures outside of the school

Outdoor experiences

The children will play outside on a daily basis. We may also take nature walks to a neighbourhood park or the beach depending on the weather, season and purpose.

We always recommend that you dress your child appropriate to the season. The best solution is to dress your child in different layers so she or he can undress or add on new layers, depending on the situation.

Field trips

For adventures further afield, we will always inform you ahead of time and often ask for parent assistance. The field trips will be in relation to the units of study and in collaboration with parents. We welcome your input.

14. Management

Management structure

The IWSTH is part of the primary school 'De Vrije School Den Haag', which is the Dutch Waldorf school. This school originated from the idea that students, teachers, staff and parents together form a community and need no formal director.

Children and their development are the central focus of the school. The teachers are responsible for the didactic and pedagogical policy. Staff, parents and management work together to ensure that the conditions are met for the teachers to be able to carry out their work with the children. The principal supports this process, and holds the final responsibility for the school.

The school is merged with Waldorf schools for secondary education in The Hague, Leiden and Rotterdam. Together they are called 'Stichting Vrijescholen Zuidwest Nederland (ZWN)'. This foundation acts as the responsible authority and employer for the IWSTH, De Vrije School Den Haag, the Marecollege in Leiden and the Rudolf Steiner College in Rotterdam. The management of the foundation is formed by the central director, who has the final responsibility for this legal entity. This position is held by: Mr. J.H.B. (Artho) Jansen.

Supervisory Board

The school has a supervisory board, which monitors the functioning of the central director. Important decisions by the central director (i.e. determining the budget and drawing up the annual accounts, mergers with other schools and policy plans) have to be approved by the supervisory board.

Supervisory Board

- W. (Wouter) van Ewijk (voorzitter)
- M. (Marten) de Bruine
- K.C. (Karin) Jansen
- M. (Madeleine) Vreeburg
- T. (Ted) van Schie

Participation council

By law, every school in the Netherlands has a participation council⁴, where elected representatives of teachers and parents are consulted over matters concerning the quality of the school. For the 2023-2024 school year, the members of the participation council are Sarah Mann, Lindie van Jaarsveld, Freddy Nyiti and Ieva Henrikson.

Acting on the code for proper management

In 2015, the VO Raad (Secondary council) set out a new code for proper management. The management and supervisory board of ZWN endorse this code. As an extension of this code, a number of documents have been published which reflect good educational management. The selection is partly required by the code. It involves the following documents:

The statutes of the foundation (the statutory aims of the foundation are included in this, as well as the formal division of tasks between supervisors and management);

The Regulation Management Supervisory Board and School Leader dated 13 January 2009⁵ (this is an elaboration on the statutes in which mutual tasks and authorities between supervisors, management and school leaders have been established);

The Integrity code ZWN (this describes how problems in connection with integrity in relation to conflict of interest are dealt with within ZWN);

⁴ <https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/education-culture-science/parents-students/participation>

⁵ In the code proper educational management, there are two documents: the management statute and regulations regarding the functioning of the management and supervision. For ZWN, both documents are combined in the document mentioned here.

The Complaints regulation ZWN (this regulation contains the formal steps a parent and/or student can take in case of a complaint against the school);

Whistle-blower regulation ZWN (this regulates which steps can be taken by staff in case of well-founded suspicions of abuse. This regulation is meant to protect the plaintiff);

Annual accounts ZWN 2014 (Certified).

15. Complaints procedure

Where do you go if you have a complaint?

Questions, problems, concerns and complaints can develop in any school about many different matters. They can occur in every possible combination between students, staff and parents. It is important that the person who has the problem reports this as soon as possible. To this end, a complaints procedure has been drawn up.

Internal and external complaints procedure

Internal complaints

Internal complaints regard questions, problems and (usually verbal) complaints that can be dealt with within the school.

The internal procedure

Three points of contact:

First point of contact

The class teacher. In case of pedagogical problems, behavioural problems, practical questions, etc.

Second point of contact

The Learning Support Coordinator (LSC). If it has not been possible to solve the matter with the class teacher or if there is a problem of trust.

Third point of contact

The school principal. If the matter cannot be solved satisfactorily with the class teacher and LSC, you may contact the school principal.

If the matter is still unresolved, it will go to the central director of the foundation. The director will determine whether everything has been done in dealing with the problem/complaint to come to a proper solution.

If this also does not lead to a resolution, there is the possibility to submit a formal complaint in writing to the Stichting GCBO.

External complaints

External complaints regard the complaints committee of the Vereniging Bijzonder Scholen (VBS). This procedure comes into effect:

- a. Following an internal procedure.
- b. Without an internal procedure. In the event of a particularly serious situation, or a situation that is difficult to discuss.

The external procedure

Mrs. D. Dane Peeters, whose contact details are available through our administration, offers guidance to the plaintiff in the external handling of the complaint by the national complaints committee for general special education.

They work according to the 'Regulation national complaints committee for general special education'. She may be contacted through:

Stichting GCBO (Geschillen Commissies Bijzonder Onderwijs)

Postbus 82324

2508 EH Den Haag

T 070 - 386 1697

F 070 - 302 08 36

E info@gcbo.nl

w www.gcbo.nl

Confidential person

In the situations above, we have assumed that the communication is clear, and the intentions are genuine, but that there is a difference of opinion. This is not always the case or is not perceived as such. When it becomes difficult to express an issue, which concerns undesirable behaviour, where boundaries have been crossed, especially if it concerns behaviour that is perceived as threatening, the confidential person may be contacted. Undesirable behaviour includes intimidation/threats, sexual intimidation, undesired intimacies, bullying, discrimination and aggression.

The confidential person can offer primary help and advice. In the second instance, she can determine whether there might be a solution in an informal situation. A meeting with the confidential person is, initially, always confidential. This is the reason why she is located outside the school. After an analysis of the problem, she can refer and assist in internal and external procedures. The confidential person to consult is **Bertien den Dulk**.

Bertien den Dulk

T 06-10272916

E bertiendendulk@casema.nl

16. Waldorf organisations

Vereniging van vrijescholen

(Association of Waldorf schools In the Netherlands)

Vereniging van vrijescholen

Diederichslaan 25

3971 PA Driebergen.

T 0343-536060

E vereniging@vrijescholen.nl

W www.vrijescholen.nl

W www.kiezenvoordevrijeschool.nl

The Association of Waldorf Schools (Vereniging van vrijescholen) is a national common-interest organisation of Waldorf school boards in the Netherlands. By the end of 2017, there were a total of 106 Waldorf school education locations in The Netherlands. In the Netherlands, almost 28 000 students attend a Waldorf school.

Tasks of the Vereniging van vrijescholen:

- Support for administrative and managerial questions;
- Representing the interests of Waldorf schools at a national level;
- Developing and maintaining the quality of Waldorf school education;
- Stimulating of national and international cooperation in the Waldorf school movement.

BVS Schooladvies

BVS Schooladvies

T 030-2819656

W www.bvs-schooladvies.nl

E admin@bvs-schooladvies.nl

BVS School advice (BVS-schooladvies) has been a national knowledge and expertise centre for Waldorf school education for more than 36 years. They focus on the guidance of education of Waldorf schools and the school organisation. The organisation of Waldorf schools is their main objective.

BVS-schooladvies has counsellors with knowledge on the following subjects:

- Themes with content on Waldorf school education
- School organisation
- Content for education, such as teaching methods, action-oriented working, social-emotional development
- Student care/support.

Representatives of the school can request the afore-mentioned services. Parents can also come to us with questions regarding the development of their child.

For extensive information of our complete range of services (for schools and parents), please visit the website.

IASWECE

International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education

W www.iaswece.org

The International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education is an organ of the cultural impulse of Rudolf Steiner and the worldwide Steiner/Waldorf movement.

As colleagues working together in this world association, our goals are to:

- Foster cooperation among colleagues throughout the world, through meetings, conferences, working groups, etc.
- Deepen and renew the work with the young child out of the sources of Waldorf education, and support for its quality
- Foster training and continuing development opportunities for caregivers, kindergarten teachers and educators
- Undertake and support collaborative research on contemporary questions regarding the care and education of the young child
- Collaborate with parents, other educators, and the wider society about the needs of the young child
- Protect the freedom and name of Steiner and Waldorf early childhood education
- Provide resources, information and publications on Waldorf early childhood education
- Offer support – human, educational and financial – for projects seeking to foster Waldorf early childhood education throughout the world.

Hague Circle

Hague Circle

International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education

W www.waldorf-international.org

The Hague Circle is the International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education. Twice a year, active Waldorf teachers from all over the world meet for a multi-day conference in one of the participating countries or at the Goetheanum in Dornach.

The conferences serve the mutual understanding and exchange on key educational issues that have national or global significance. The members of the International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education bring their experiences to the meetings, and discuss - on the basis of differentiated perceptions - the key criteria of Waldorf education and their application in different geographic, cultural, economic and political regions of the world.

International Council for Steiner Waldorf Education participants are appointed by institutions responsible for Waldorf education in their respective home countries, and work closely together with those institutions. They are ambassadors of a pedagogical impulse, whose universal human aspects foster both the unfolding of the individuality in the human being as well as a diverse global culture.

