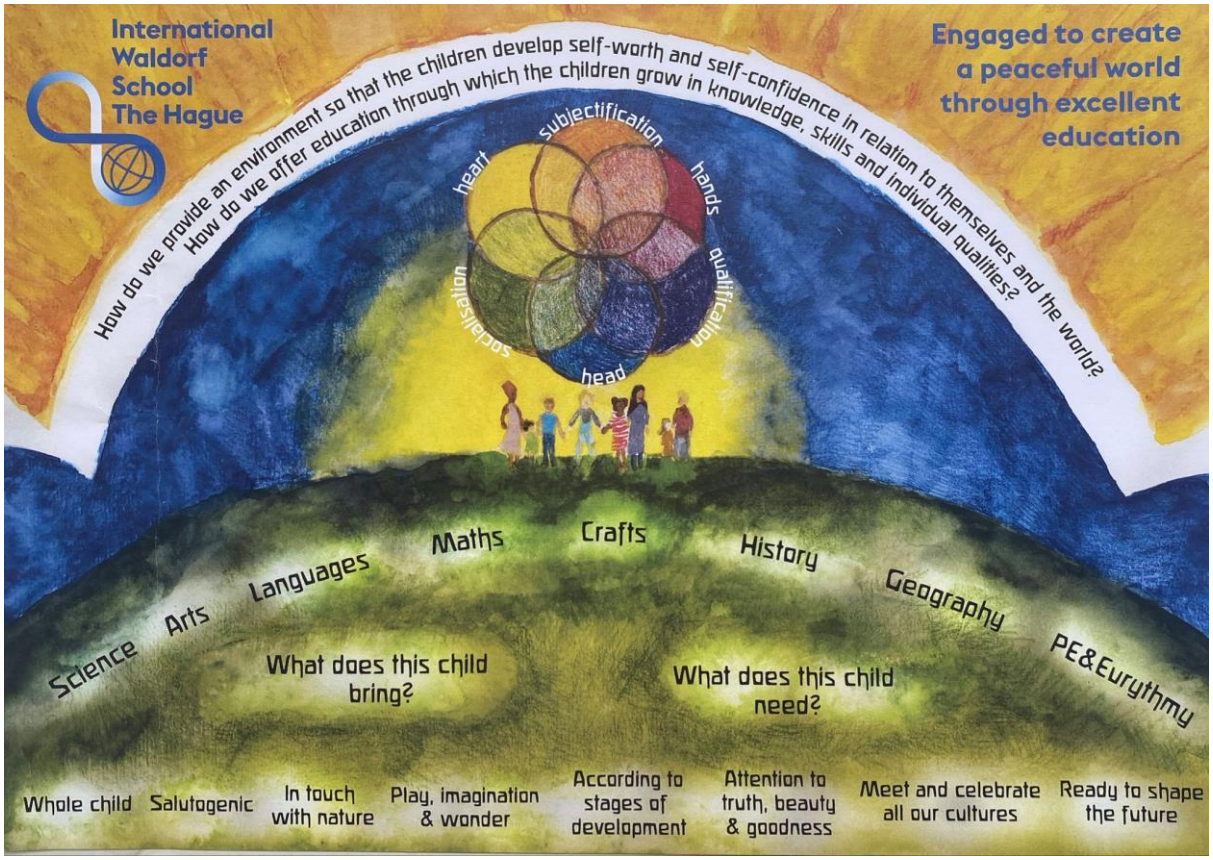
School Guide

IWSTH

International Waldorf School The Hague

2026–2027



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*

2026–2027

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1. About us

Our history

Waldorf Schools[1] are inspired by the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the founder of anthroposophy. Following World War I, he committed himself to encouraging 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 over 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 offices 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 and who fulfil the admissions criteria. 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 to stimulate them to develop their own problem-solving abilities.

Core values

- We take our inspiration from Anthroposophy. We strive towards an education in which 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

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: Sheona McEwan (ib@iwsth.org)

Admissions and administrative coordinator: Liane van der Zalm (info@iwsth.org)
Public Relations, Communications and Marketing: Sarah Mann (s.mann@iwsth.org)
Concierge: Kyril Herkelman (k.herkelman@iwsth.org)

Kindergarten teachers

The Mapletree Kindergarten teachers: Evridiki Liaskou (e.liaskou@iwsth.org) and Anna Cumbo (a.cumbo@iwsth.org)
The Willowtree Kindergarten teachers: Katarina Cmarec (k.cmarec@iwsth.org) and Jocelyn Roy (j.roy@iwsth.org)

Primary school class teachers

Class 1 teachers: Ananda Ituarte Ojeda (a.ituarteojeda@iwsth.org) and Marlize ter Borg (m.terborg@iwsth.org)
Class 2 teachers: Liselotte Ensink op Kemna (l.ensinkopkemna@iwsth.org) and Marlize ter Borg (m.terborg@iwsth.org)
Class 3 teachers: Adela Svobodova (a.svobodova@iwsth.org) and Tristan Cozens (t.cozens@iwsth.org)
Class 4 teachers: Mieke van der Merwe (m.vandermerwe@iwsth.org) and Tristan Cozens (t.cozens@iwsth.org)
Class 5 and 6 teacher: Lindie van Jaarsveld (l.vanjaarsveld@iwsth.org)

Specialist teachers

Dutch teacher: Serena Hillenaar (s.hillenaar@iwsth.org)
Handwork teacher: Jocelyn Roy (j.roy@iwsth.org)
Gym teacher: Rowan Westerduin (r.westerduin@iwsth.org)

English as an 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 Messstraat 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 1–6 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 08:35.

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 freely 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 donated 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 mass-communication tool (for class messages and school-wide announcements). Parents can also use it to send a brief, timely message to the teacher (for example, “My child will go home with a friend.”), or it can be used to request a meeting. Parro messages should not contain long texts. Please use email for more extensive messages. The school principal is not available via Parro, only by email. Each class teacher will share important announcements and newsletters via Parro. Parent meetings will also be scheduled through Parro. We expect all parents to stay up to date.

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. Please include a brief description of the illness (e.g. fever, ear infection) or appointment (dentist, hospital, visa request). The teacher will be able to read your message in the morning.

Email

We use email along with Parro 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. Please also respect the private lives of faculty by not expecting responses outside normal working hours or during weekends and holidays.

Newsletter

Every two months, you will receive a school newsletter by email with information on school policies and reports on upcoming or past events.

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

Twice 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 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 a sense of school community and strengthen connections amongst parents in the class.

Parent association

Waldorf schools are known for their lively parent community. Several parents at our school took the initiative to start a parent association. They support the school 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 Offer

The 'learning support offer' explains the help and guidance that the school is able to provide, how we collaborate with other organisations, and how we manage the learning support as a school. The school is part of the SPPOH partnership for inclusive education for The Hague region. The first part of this section in the school guide discusses the SPPOH partnership, followed by information about our school.

8.1 Duty of Care

As a school, we have a legal obligation to ensure that every child finds an appropriate educational place, even when extra help is needed. This obligation, known as the duty of care, applies to both current students and new applicants. In consultation with parents, we seek the best possible support and educational placement. We work together with the SPPOH partnership and other partners to find this placement.

8.2 Basic Support

Every school provides learning support to children who need it. The organisation and delivery of support within each school must be solid, which is why we refer to this as "basic support". All students are entitled to this school-based support if they need it. This may include support for students with specific learning difficulties, concentration problems, or behaviour challenges.

8.3 Additional Support

Additional support is available when a student needs more help than is provided through the school's basic support. An Individual Development Plan (OPP) is written by the school to monitor and guide the student's progress and the effectiveness of the support. This support is discussed in a Multidisciplinary Meeting (MDO) with the parents and, if possible, the student. Sometimes SPPOH arranges this additional support; other times, the school does. Support may include a specific "arrangement" grant or other in-school support. A student may also be referred to special (primary) education with an admission declaration (TLV).

8.4 School's Support Offer

The International Waldorf School The Hague is a small school with very limited resources. We follow the support structures of SPPOH. Almost all of the in-school support is provided by the class teachers. When parents have a concern about their child, they should first raise this with the class teacher. If concerns persist, then parents may contact the Learning Support Coordinator (Sheona McEwan).

8.4.1 Support Structure

All teachers are expected to be aware of individual children's needs and to plan for these. Class teachers include differentiation ideas for both below-average and above-average students in their lesson planning. Sometimes additional resources are provided in the classroom. If general differentiation in the planning is not sufficient to support an individual student's needs, then individual goals will be set by the teacher and communicated to the parents. For some children, it may be necessary to put a specific behaviour plan in place. If individual goals are not achieved, or the progress of a student is consistently slow, then the school will move the student to Care Level 3 and consult with external organisations for advice. It should be noted that the school cannot provide 'shadow teachers' for individual children, whether funded publicly or privately. The teachers can always consult with the Learning Support Coordinator (Sheona McEwan) or with the Student Well-being Coordinator (Mieke van der Merwe) for advice and support.

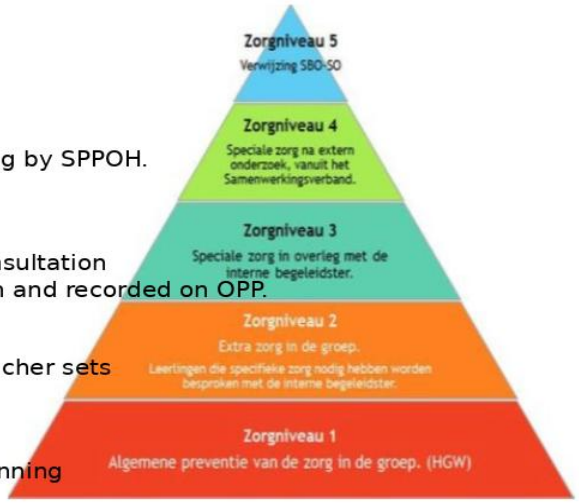
Care level 5:
Referral to special education

Care level 4:
Specialized support after (external) research – funding by SPPOH.
Multidisciplinary meetings held.

Care level 3: Additional support or assessment in consultation with Sheona McEwan. Goals set with Sheona McEwan and recorded on OPP.

Care level 2: Additional support in the classroom. Teacher sets goals. Students flagged up with Sheona McEwan.

Care level 1: Differentiation in the classroom and planning



8.4.2 Strengths in Our Support

Class sizes at IWSTH are small. This means that class teachers are able to give attention to individual students.

IWSTH is an international school that provides a welcoming school environment for all children, whatever their background and educational experience.

Many teachers and students come from countries across the world and are also bilingual. This means that the school has a lot of experience in supporting students with English as an Additional Language. The school also has a specialist teacher who gives individual or small-group lessons to students new to English.

The Waldorf curriculum allows for rhythm and routine, movement and creativity. It is based on well-established child development principles and incorporates 'head, heart and hands'.

8.4.3 Required School Skills

To develop optimally, a child should possess the following school-related skills:

Self-reliance:	The student can follow group routines and verbal (classroom) instructions with minimal support.
Social skills:	The student can function independently and appropriately in a group with peers.
Emotional regulation:	The student accepts adult authority and follows verbal behavioural guidance.
Curriculum:	The student can follow the curriculum offered through basic support, with some differentiation or extra resources.
Group size:	The student can learn in a group of 15 students. Our classes have a maximum of 15 students.

8.4.4 Ambitions and Development Goals

The school staff have undergone some initial training in understanding and teaching sexuality in primary school classrooms but we plan to develop our school policy further next year. In 2025–2026, we spent time developing our student well-being policies and incorporating topics of diversity, positive behaviour, sexuality and mental health into teachers' planning. This will continue in 2026–2027.

8.5 Expertise in the School

The school has the following specialised expertise available within the team:

Type of expertise	Available in team: Yes/No	Summary
Language, reading and speech	No	
Mathematics and arithmetic	No	
Behaviour	No	
Early childhood	Yes	Specialist kindergarten teachers
(Gifted) intelligence	No	
Learning difficulties	No	
Motor skills	Yes	Specialist PE teacher
Multilingualism and EAL	Yes	Specialist EAL teacher Specialist Dutch teacher

8.6 Educational Offer
Our school offers the following:

Didactic support	Summary
Preventive monitoring of learning development	Twice-yearly testing to track progress
Support for (severe) maths difficulties	No
Extra challenge programmes	No
Motor skills development	No
Dyslexia support	No
Multilingualism support	English as an Additional Language Dutch as an Additional Language

Pedagogical Offer:	Summary
Strengthening the pedagogical climate	Twice-monthly pedagogical meetings for teachers
Preventive monitoring of social-emotional development and behaviour	Annual DUO checklist for Classes 4, 5, 6
Enhancing social-emotional development and well-being	Student well-being coordinator
Strengthening social skills and resilience	'Rainbow' training Classes 4, 5 and 6

8.7 School's Network Partners
We collaborate with the following partners:

Network Partner	Connected to our school (yes/no)
Special Primary Education (SBO)	No
Special Education (SO)	No
Inclusive Education Advisor	Yes – Krystle Verkerk (SPPOH)
School Social Work	Yes – Siham El Bali (KRACHT)
Attendance Officer	Yes – Elke Philips (School Attendance Office)
Youth Health Care, school doctor, nurse	Yes – Esther Kuipers (CJG doctor)
Youth Care Partner	Yes – Sasha Marusheva (KRACHT)
Police/community officer	Yes
Speech Therapy	No
Physiotherapy	No

8.8 School Building
These physical spaces are available in our school to support accessibility and additional needs:

Physical Space	Available in our school (yes/no)
Wheelchair accessible	No
Disabled toilet	No
Facilities for deaf/hard of hearing	No
Facilities for blind/visually impaired	No
Meeting room	No
Therapy room	No
Medical care room	No
Time-out room	No
Elevator	No

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At the International Waldorf School 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 through context-based learning, with children 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 work in more than one language is treated as an asset that enhances their development.

School readiness

When a child approaches the age of 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 they enter 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 taken 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, respect for each other's backgrounds and respect for personal belongings are among the most important values 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.

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 addressing the explicit and implicit biases that undermine the creation of a 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 recognises 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 contradict and undermine the goals of this education.

Working towards 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 the 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

According to Dutch law, children are not permitted to use mobile phones at 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 handed in to the class teacher at the beginning of the day. The teacher will return the phone to the child at the end of the day. This rule also applies to smartwatches and other smart devices.

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

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

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 accompanying 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 how birthdays will be celebrated in the class. We encourage parents to prepare a small, 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 carefully chosen 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

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

School year 2026 – 2027

- Monday, August 31st: First day of school for Classes 1–6; dismissal at 12:30
- Tuesday, September 1st: First day of school for Kindergarten
- Tuesday, September 15th: Prinsjesdag - free day
- Monday, October 19th – Friday, October 23rd: Autumn break
- Monday, October 26th: Study Day (no school)
- Thursday, December 17th: Christmas celebration. 12:30 dismissal
- Friday, December 18th: holiday (no school)
- Monday, December 21st – Friday, January 1st: Christmas break
- Monday, January 4th: Study Day (no school)
- Friday, February 19th: Study Day (no school)
- Monday, February 22nd – Friday, February 26th: Spring break
- Thursday, March 25th: Study Day (no school)
- Friday, March 26th: Good Friday (no school)
- Monday, March 29th: Easter Monday (no school)
- Friday, April 23rd: Study Day (no school)
- Monday, April 26th – Friday, May 7th: May break
- Monday, May 17th: Whit Monday (no school)
- Friday, June 25th: Saint John's celebration (lessons until 12:30)
- Monday, June 28th: Study Day (no school)
- Friday, July 16th: Last day of school; dismissal at 10:30
- Monday, July 19th – Sunday, August 29th: Summer break
- Monday, August 30th: First day of the 2027–2028 school year

11. Attendance

From the day your child turns 5, they are 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 on the first day of absence. You should report this on Parro before 08:40. Please include a brief description of the illness (e.g. fever, ear infection, chicken pox) as we are obliged to report some illnesses to other parents or to the Public Health Authority (GGD).
If the absence is longer than three days, the teacher may contact the parents to ask for an update on the child's recovery.
The teacher will record when a child returns to school.
If a child is absent without any notification of sickness, the absence will be recorded as 'suspected unauthorised absence'.

Doctor's statement

Children who are frequently absent due to sickness may be referred to the school doctor at the Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin (CJG). Frequent absence is understood to be: 3 absences of 6-10 days per school year; 6 absences of 1-5 days per school year; 2 absences of 10+ days per school year.

If your child becomes sick in the holidays and is unable to return to The Netherlands in time to start back at school on the appropriate day, you are required to provide a doctor's letter on letterheaded paper bearing the appropriate stamp.

Appointments in school time
Appointments with the family doctor, dentist, medical specialist and so on should be made outside school hours whenever possible. The school realises, however, that sometimes it is unavoidable that these appointments take place during the school day. Parents must report these absences in Parro before 08:40 on the day of the absence. A note should indicate the type of absence (doctor, dentist, visa).
The absence should be as short as possible. Children should be collected from school as close to the appointment as possible to allow for reasonable travel time and should come back to school after the appointment unless the appointment ends after 15:00.

Therapy in school time
Some children may require regular therapy during the school day. This is permitted by law if the therapist shares the therapy goals with the school and there is an understanding between the school, parents and therapists that the therapy is contributing to the child's well-being and learning. Parents should contact the Learning Support Coordinator to discuss the therapy if it cannot be arranged outside school hours.

Exceptional Leave During School Time

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 that is on the school's website. A request for absence should be made at least 6 weeks in advance of the requested absence, to allow for an appeal process through the Municipality's School Attendance Office. Although four-year-old children are not legally obliged to follow these guidelines, we would respectfully ask parents of our youngest children to follow the same procedures as those for the rest of the school.

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 advance.

Religious reasons

For celebrations or obligations based on religion or religious beliefs (such as Eid al-Fitr, Holi, baptism) special leave may be requested. In this case, a notification by the parents in Parro, at least two days before the day of absence, is sufficient. Absence will be granted for 1 day per occasion. Travel time to celebrate a religious festival abroad is not permitted. Absence for cultural festivals (such as Carnival or 4th July) is not permitted.

Important circumstances

Important circumstances (art. 11g of the law on compulsory education) are exceptional circumstances that occur outside the control of the parents and/or child that prevent the child from attending school. Examples are: moving house, a wedding of a close relative, a funeral of a close relative, a 25th or 40th wedding anniversary of a parent or grandparent. If the absence is for 10 school days or less, the school director decides, according to legal guidelines, whether the leave may be granted. If the request is for more than 10 days, the

2 https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/education-culture-science/parents-students/participation

Compulsory Education Officer makes the decision. Parents have the right to lodge an appeal regarding the director's decision, if they wish to do so. The school can provide parents with the contact details of the 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 by a maximum of 5 additional hours. You must obtain permission for this from 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 they get used to a full school week as soon as possible.

Unauthorised absence

If your child is not at school without having a valid reason, the school is obliged to inform the compulsory education officer. The Compulsory Education Officer may start an investigation and even issue a court warrant. This measure may lead to a fine of up to €100 per child per day.

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 class teacher 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 school's registration system (Parro).
- 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 will normally take place within 5 school days from the first day of absence.
- If the meeting reveals problems in the family situation leading to the absence, the teacher and the learning support coordinator will work together to find a suitable solution. The compulsory education officer will also be informed.

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

Procedure

If a child fails to come to school on time and no notification of sickness has been received before 08:40, the teacher will report the absence as ‘unauthorised’.
If the child is later determined to be sick, the teacher or Learning Support Coordinator can edit the absence in Parro to ‘sick’ and the absence is considered to be ‘authorised’.
If the child arrives late at school, the teacher or Learning Support Coordinator can edit the absence in Parro to ‘late’. However, the absence still counts as unauthorised.
If a child does not appear at school for the second day without a valid reason, the parents will be contacted by the teacher to find out the reason for absence. If the absence lasts for a week, then the parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Learning Support Coordinator or School Principal. The Compulsory Education Officer will also be informed through the Municipality’s automated registration system.

Procedure for Lateness

Arriving late at school is a form of unauthorised absence. Lateness is recorded when a child comes into the school building after 08:40.
The 3-6-9-12 absence protocol below is based on the Methodical Approach School Absence (MAS) of The Hague city council to reduce persistent lateness.

3: When a child has been late to school three times, the teacher will speak to the parents and give them a letter reminding them of the school policy.
6: When a child has been late to school six times, the parents will be sent a letter signed by the School Principal. In this letter, the parents are informed that, if their child is late 9 times, this will result in a notification to the Compulsory Education Officer.
9: When a child has been late for school nine times, the school will notify the Compulsory Education Officer. The parents will be informed of this in writing with reference to the number of times the child has been late. The Compulsory Education Officer will send the parents a warning letter or may decide to invite the parents for a meeting.
12: When a child has been late at school twelve times, the school will again notify the Compulsory Education Officer. The parents will already have received a warning letter and will then be invited to a meeting by the Compulsory Education Officer, who may issue the parents with a fine or a warrant to appear in court.
NB: The absence lists are processed at the end of the month. Therefore, you may 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 number of times the child has been late.

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 Tuesday to Friday, the school provides all of the meals (snack and lunch) for kindergarten children.

Snack and lunch in 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 divde).	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. In line with regulations from the Dutch department of education, we also teach Citizenship and we administer external assessments.

Below, you can find a more detailed summary of the Citizenship and Mathematics curricula, as well as an overview of the assessments we employ.

Assessments

Children in Classes 1 to 6 are given assessments twice a year to help teachers to track progress. These school assessments include PM Reading Benchmarks (a standardised English reading test) and in-school maths assessments based on the Waldorf curriculum. The results are included in the end-of-year school report.
Children in Classes 4, 5 and 6 are assessed twice a year using MAP Growth. This is an online tool used by international and American schools. Reading, Mathematics and Language are assessed and children's progress is tracked over time. The results are shared with parents and included in the end-of-year school report.

The school has a subscription to the online GL assessment Cognitive Abilities Test 4 (CAT-4). Children in Class 6 may take this test to help with a determination of which Dutch secondary school stream they should apply for. It may also be used by the Learning Support Coordinator to help identify a child's learning profile when the school has concerns about their progress.

Mathematics at The International Waldorf School

At the International Waldorf School The Hague, mathematics is taught in a meaningful, age-appropriate way that aims to develop both understanding and confidence. Mathematics is approached as more than an intellectual exercise: movement, rhythm and story are used to engage the whole child. In the early grades, emphasis is placed on building a secure sense of number and a strong conceptual foundation rather than rushing ahead with procedures. As children grow older, this foundation supports increasingly abstract, practical and analytical mathematical work.

Teachers seek to create a safe learning environment in which children can work through challenges without fear, develop perseverance, and experience mathematics as something understandable and worthwhile.

Main themes by class

Class One

- Exploring the quality of numbers in the surrounding world
- Counting and developing a strong sense of number
- An introduction to the four processes of number (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division)
- Addition and subtraction facts

Class Two

- Consolidating addition and subtraction facts
- Working with all four processes
- Developing an understanding of place value
- Learning the times and division tables
- Developing an orientation to time

Class Three

- Consolidating arithmetic facts and the four processes of number
- Beginning vertical written methods and regrouping
- Measurement
- Money
- Time

Class Four

- Strengthening arithmetic facts and fluency with the four processes
- Introducing long multiplication and long division
- Developing a foundational understanding of fractions

Class Five

- Deepening work with fractions
- Introducing decimal fractions
- Exploring freehand geometry

Class Six

- Extending decimal work, including repeating decimals and decimal/fraction conversions
- Introducing exponents and ratios
- Percentages, profits and discounts
- Developing geometric drawing with a compass and straight edge
- An introduction to coordinate geometry
- An introduction to algebra

A strong foundation for further learning

Across the primary years, the curriculum is designed to build secure fundamental skills while preserving curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. Alongside mathematical knowledge, children develop work habits, confidence, flexible and independent thinking, and the ability to approach new problems with perseverance. By the end of Class Six, the aim is for children to have a strong mathematical foundation from which they can move confidently into the next stage of their education.

Citizenship at The International Waldorf School

At the International Waldorf School The Hague, citizenship education is woven into the curriculum, classroom life and wider school community. It supports our aim of helping children to become independent, thoughtful and socially responsible individuals who are able to participate positively in society. The curriculum develops progressively from Kindergarten to Class Six, moving from children's immediate relationships and classroom community towards a broader understanding of society, democracy and civic participation.

- **Democratic values:** Developing an understanding of freedom of expression, equality and equal treatment, respect and tolerance, and the rejection of discrimination. As children grow older, they learn about rules, rights and responsibilities, elections, human and children's rights, government and democratic institutions.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** Recognising and respecting similarities and differences between people, including differences in culture, religion, beliefs, family background, identity, abilities and viewpoints. Children are encouraged to appreciate different perspectives and to engage respectfully with others.
- **Civil and social skills:** Learning to express ideas, listen to others, ask questions, cooperate, discuss differing viewpoints, form opinions, reach compromises and participate in shared decision-making. These skills become increasingly sophisticated as children move through the school.

- **Responsibility and community:** Developing responsibility for oneself, other people, the school community and the environment, with increasing opportunities for participation, service, cooperation and shared decision-making.
- **Living the values:** Citizenship is not taught only as knowledge. The school aims to create a culture in which democratic values are visible and children have regular opportunities to practise them through relationships, classroom activities, school events, collaborative work and participation in school life.

Together, these elements help children grow into independent, free-thinking people who can participate actively and responsibly in society.

Story material within the Waldorf curriculum

The story material at IWSTH ties in well with the Citizenship 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 Classes 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 will 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.

Student Council

We have a student council at our school. This allows our students to actively participate in our school life, and gives them an opportunity to raise concerns that the student population may have or to contribute new ideas. The student council also organises events for the school, such as a Traffic Awareness Week, a collection for the food bank and a dress-up day for the upper primary.

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 and 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 that are important to 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 appropriately for the season. The best solution is to dress your child in different layers so they can remove or add 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. Field trips will be related 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, Alphen aan den Rijn and Zoetermeer 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. Sebastiaan Cooiman.

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

- S. (Stephan) Valk – voorzitter
- M. (Madeleine) Vreeburg
- T. (Ted) van Schie
- D. (Durk Jan) Tabak
- B. (Bernard) Jacobs

- L. (Lydia) van Deelen

Participation council

By law, every school in the Netherlands has a participation council[4], where elected representatives of teachers and parents are consulted over matters concerning the quality of the school. For the 2026–2027 school year, the members of the participation council are Sarah Mann, Lindie van Jaarsveld, Freddy Nyiti and Bernadette Tedeschi.

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 2009[5] (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);

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).

4 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.

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

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. There is also a communications pathway diagram to aid in determining who to contact according to the nature of the concern. See heading **Parent and School Communication Pathways.**

Internal and external complaints procedure

Internal complaints

Internal complaints concern 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: for pedagogical problems, behavioural problems, practical questions, etc.

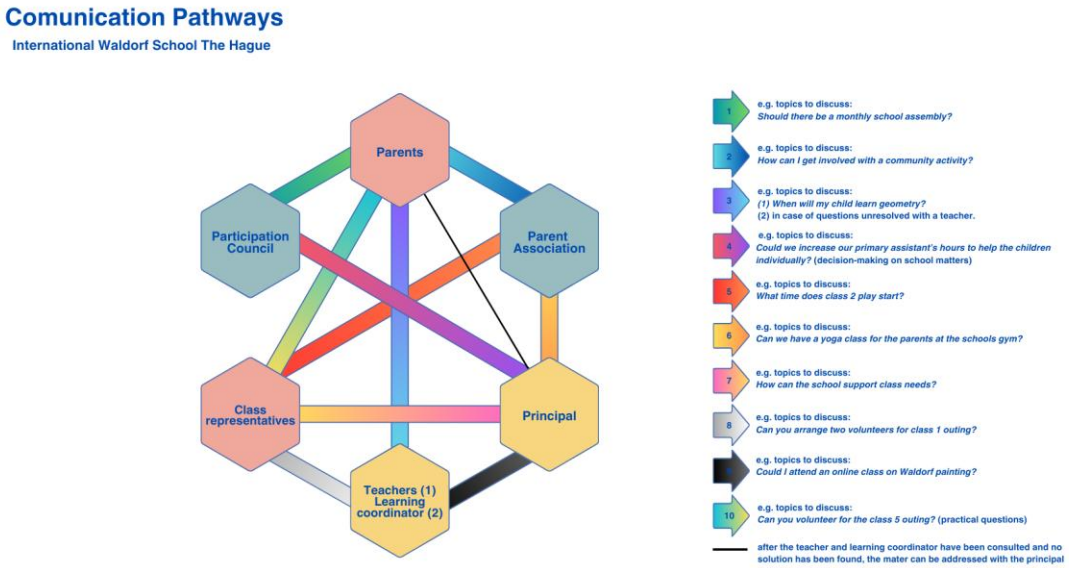
Second point of contact
The Learning Support Coordinator (LSC): if it has not been possible to solve the matter with the class teacher or if there is a problem of trust.

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 via **email** only. Please do not use Parro for this purpose.

If the matter is still unresolved, it will go to the central director of the foundation, Sebastiaan Cooiman: s.Cooiman@vszh.nl. The director will determine whether all appropriate steps have been taken to resolve the problem or complaint.

Parent and School Communication Pathways

We use the pathway chart below to help parents determine who to contact according to the type of question, concern or complaint:



External complaints

Confidential person

In the situations above, we have assumed that communication is clear and the intentions are proper, but that there is a difference of opinion. This is not always the case, or it may not be perceived as such. When it becomes difficult to raise an issue concerning undesirable behaviour or crossed boundaries, especially behaviour 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 initial help and advice. In the second instance, she can determine whether the matter might be resolved informally. Initially, a meeting with the confidential person is always confidential. This is the reason why she is located outside the school. After analysing the problem, she can make referrals and assist with internal and external procedures. The confidential person to consult is **Aafke Scharloo.**

Aafke Scharloo
E aafkescharloo@gmail.com

Stichting GCBO works according to the 'Regulation national complaints committee for general special education'. Contact information:

Stichting GCBO (Geschillen Commissies Bijzonder Onderwijs)
E info@gcbo.nl
W www.gcbo.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 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 Schooladvies (BVS-schooladvies) has been a national knowledge and expertise centre for Waldorf school education for more than 36 years. They focus on guidance for Waldorf school education and school organisation. The organisation of Waldorf schools is their main objective.

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

- Themes related to Waldorf school education
- School organisation
- Educational content, such as teaching methods, action-oriented working, social-emotional development
- Student care/support.

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

For detailed information about 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 work with the young child from the sources of Waldorf education, and support 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 wider society on 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 foster 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 geographical, 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 individuality in the human being and a diverse global culture.

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