

American International School of Rotterdam



Early Childhood and Elementary School Handbook 2018-2019

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AISR Guiding Statements

Mission

Our mission is to challenge and inspire students to be principled and resourceful citizens of the world.

Vision

We will be recognized as an outstanding international school that empowers students to take control of their own learning, has a warm and welcoming learning environment supportive of the diverse needs of the school community and offers a challenging, inclusive academic program designed to afford all students opportunities for success.

Core Values

- We believe that everyone can learn and achieve at high levels.
- We believe that every person has intrinsic worth and potential.
- We believe it is important to understand and accept others for who they are.
- We believe that embracing diversity promotes open minds and enhances perspectives.
- We believe that it is important to develop self-confidence and preserve the dignity of others.
- We believe that everyone should be included and afforded the opportunity to succeed.
- We believe it is important to work well with others and show appreciation for their contributions.
- We believe we all have a responsibility to contribute to society and the well-being of others.

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INTRODUCTION

AISR Philosophy

The American International School of Rotterdam is committed to providing a high-quality English language education. The curriculum is American in nature, modified to provide an international perspective, for students from a wide range of nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

The School pledges to consistently strive for educational excellence with a focus on learning. As a community of learners, AISR is further committed to developing students who will interact positively with others.

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Equal Opportunity Statement

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity at AISR.

SCHEDULE

Official Hours

Official school hours are **08:15-15:05** (Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 finish on Wednesdays at **11:40**). The office is open daily from 07:45 until 17:00. Each student has recess periods during the day as well as a 45-minute lunch break.

Early Dismissals

Once a month on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday throughout the year, the school day ends at **11:40**. Early dismissal days are used by the staff to concentrate on curriculum and professional development. The dates are noted on the school calendar.

CURRICULUM

Grades Pre-K1 and Pre-K2

At AISR, our Early Learning Program is based on the *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, a comprehensive, research-based early learning curriculum that supports children in their cognitive and social-emotional development. The Creative Curriculum meets all of the standards put forth for effective early learning curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Learning Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE). It is developmental in approach and rests on a solid foundation of child development theory and research in the following areas:

- Abraham Maslow -- Basic needs and learning
- Erik Erikson -- The emotions and learning
- Jean Piaget -- Logical thinking and reasoning
- Lev Vygotsky -- Social interaction and learning
- Howard Gardner -- Multiple intelligences
- Sara Smilansky -- Play and learning
- Research on learning and resiliency
- Research on learning and the brain

Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development is an integral part of the Early Learning curriculum. While children of a young age are naturally egocentric, we encourage them to become increasingly aware of others and be in control of their own actions. We try to encourage this awareness through regularly referring back to the behavioral expectations and asking them to assess their own behavior.

As an Early Learning team, we are constantly modeling and teaching positive ways of interacting to the children. We also set time aside during our weekly timetable to give the children opportunities to practice and talk about effective cooperation, tolerance and mutual respect. This is done through stories, discussion, role-play, games and activities encouraging even the most timid child to participate. This time is also an opportunity for children to share their feelings within a non-threatening environment. In this way, we aim for children to reach a good level of social maturity before moving into the Elementary School.

The Physical Environment

The physical learning environment in our Early Learning classrooms is designed to provide experiences that promote development in all of the areas mentioned above. Classrooms are set up to include blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, arts and crafts, a library or book corner, discovery, sand and water, music and movement, cooking and information technology. Outdoor play is also an important part of the daily routine.

Language Development

As children move through the Early Learning Department, they gain the abilities and skills to begin reading and writing. While children may not begin doing this independently until Kindergarten, they gain much knowledge of these skills through principles of emergent literacy as experienced in Pre-Kindergarten years.

Emergent Literacy in Pre-Kindergarten

Emergent literacy learning acknowledges children's learning as exploratory, holistic and social in nature. In Pre-Kindergarten the aim is to help students develop a positive attitude toward reading and writing. A variety of opportunities for children to begin to understand the concept of print are provided. Children spend time listening to stories, retelling stories and gaining new information in many forms.

Rest Time in Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 (Creative Curriculum)

The Creative Curriculum explains, “In full-day programs, rest time is very important for children. The length of rest time varies. For children who attend six hours or more, rest time provides rejuvenation for the afternoon program. Younger children may need more rest time than older preschoolers.” At AISR, we support this by providing quiet time everyday for the Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 classes after lunch.

Grades K-5

Literacy and mathematical skills and concepts form the foundation of the educational process at the elementary level. AISR uses the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for both literacy and mathematics. Science, social studies, music, art, physical education, integrated technology and languages make up the remainder of the elementary curriculum. One of the primary objectives of the elementary curriculum is to integrate subjects in order to give students an opportunity to identify relationships that exist between disciplines.

Handwriting at AISR

Even in the age of technology, handwriting remains the primary tool of communication and knowledge assessment for students in the classroom. In addition, greater writing speed “lessens the burden on working memory,” enabling children and adults to “create good reader-friendly prose” (Peeverly, 2006).

To succeed in school today, students need to master a range of foundation skills for producing and presenting their written work. Both handwriting and keyboarding are foundation skills that enable students to succeed in every setting, with every type of written assignment or testing. These two skills work together in the classroom to create an engaged, balanced, and successful learning environment. The purpose of handwriting at AISR is to develop automatic, efficient and legible handwriting using a multi-sensory and developmental approach.

Handwriting is taught in the beginning of elementary school and is mastered toward the end of the elementary years. Keyboards are introduced in the elementary environment, with exposure in K–1 classrooms, and an individualized typing program being introduced in 2nd grade. Fluency is expected by fourth to fifth grade.

The milestones for handwriting start in kindergarten. Pre-K students are still working on letter recognition and developing the fine motor skills for effective printing (manuscript). Through fine motor development, multisensory activities, and handwriting practice, most children achieve printing fluency by the end of second grade, and cursive fluency by the end of fourth grade. At AISR, explicit cursive instruction begins in the latter part of second grade (if students are developmentally ready) and continues in third grade. In fourth and fifth grade, children develop their personal style that continues into middle and high school.

The milestones for keyboarding begin in kindergarten as well. In Pre-K, the physical use of computers is limited to developing finger coordination on the ipad. In kindergarten, the emphasis is on pre-keyboarding as children develop important finger and hand motor skills with the use of the computer track-pad. The emphasis on pre-keyboarding skills continue through to second grade to help children build the foundation for keyboarding fluency toward the end of the elementary grades. The emphasis on keyboarding skills increases in third grade as children can be expected to use those skills in fourth and fifth grade. Since fluency for printing has often developed by third grade and cursive fluency is emerging, more focus on keyboarding around this time is developmentally appropriate. Furthermore, by third grade children have both increased attention to tasks as well as improved motor control. This makes learning to touch type easier.

There are three overall, handwriting standards (printing skills, pre-cursive skills, and cursive skills) and two keyboarding standards (pre-keyboarding skills and keyboarding skills). Each standard is then broken down by grade level.

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC)

The IPC is the **International Primary Curriculum** for children aged 5 to 11 years old. It is a comprehensive, thematic, creative curriculum, with a clear process of learning and specific learning goals for all subjects. It also develops **international mindedness** and encourages **personal learning**. The IPC is flexible and can be adapted to children's interests and level of understanding. With the IPC we are part of an international community of schools, teachers and learners with access to an online space for information sharing.

The IPC **Subject goals** cover the knowledge, skills and understanding of children relating to Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, ICT & Computing, Technology, History, Geography, Music, Physical Education, Art and Society.

The IPC **Personal goals** underpin the individual qualities and dispositions children will find essential in the 21st century. There are 8 IPC Personal Goals - enquiry, resilience, morality, communication, thoughtfulness, cooperation, respect and adaptability. Opportunities to experience and practice these are built into the learning tasks within each unit of work.

The IPC **International learning goals** are unique to the curriculum and help young children begin the move towards an increasingly sophisticated national, international and intercultural perspective. Each thematic IPC unit includes an international aspect, to help develop a sense of 'international mindedness'. IPC has over 130 different thematic units of learning, designed to appeal to children's interests and help them to learn more about the world around them. **Themed units** help children to see how subjects are both independent and interdependent. This enables them to see the big picture of their learning, make connections across different subjects, and talk about a topic from multiple perspectives.

Reference: <https://fieldworkeducation.com/curriculums/primary-years/about-the-ipc?e=371>

	2018-2019 IPC Units
Kindergarten	Creative Development (Road, Pet & Bread Studies), Green Fingers, We Are What We Eat, Hooray... Let's Go on Holiday!
Grade 1	Brainwave, Buildings, SuperHumans Time Travellers, I'm Alive
Grade 2	Brainwave, Footprints from the Past, Time and Place, Earth and Space, Temples, Tombs and Treasures, Saving the World, Feel the Force
Grade 3	Brainwave, On Tap, Bright Sparks, Inventions that Changed the World, Let's Plant it!, Active Planet,
Grade 4	Brainwave, Extreme Survivors, Going Global, Space Scientists, Time Tunnel, Making New Materials
Grade 5	Brainwave, The Great, the Bold and the Brave, Extreme Survivors, Weather and Climate, Look Hear!, Growing Up, Existing...Endangered...Extinct?

Modern Languages at AISR

In addition to offering Dutch as a Foreign Language (DFL) in Pre-K1–grade 5, we also offer Native Language (NL) instruction. The Elementary School Native Language Program (as well as DFL) takes place daily for 45 minutes. This program is designed for those students who already converse in their native language. It cannot unfortunately cater for those who hold the nationality but as yet do not speak the language. Based on a wealth of educational research, recognition of a child's home culture and native language is an important feature of any language learning approach. Provision for the maintenance and further development of the native language also helps to address many social, emotional and academic needs of the language learner. We strongly encourage students to continue the development of their mother tongue by taking part in these classes.

At AISR, many students study their mother tongue during the school day, and the classes are arranged according to need. At present, we have mother tongue classes in the following languages: Dutch, French, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish. Students who are not enrolled in a Native Language class go to a Dutch as a Foreign Language class.

AISR defines a Native Language as:

- A language used by the student as a language of communication (or as one of two languages of communication, in the case of bilingual students) outside the school environment and/or in his/her family.
- A language with which the student feels comfortable, and in which he/she intuitively, grammatically and correctly describes the world, his/her feelings and emotions.
- A language that ties a person to his/her cultural identity.

Fluency in a Native Language is assessed by our language department to determine whether or not students qualify for the program. Each case is individually decided with the Head of Modern Languages, Marga Akerboom (marga.akerboom@aisr.nl).

Physical Education Classes and Swimming

This is an activity-based program and requires all students to participate. The program includes: games, gymnastics, fitness, dance and swimming.

Students are required to have a separate pair of gym shoes for inside activities (no black soled shoes that will mark the gym floor) and outdoor activities (shoes for the playground and fields). Students in Grades 2-5 wear a P.E. uniform. This consists of shorts and a t-shirt. The uniform can be purchased from Mr. Brown at the beginning of the school year. The total cost is 45 euros.

AISR students in Grades 1-5 enjoy swimming as a component of their physical education program. Students will participate a swimming program for part of the school year. Classroom teachers will give advance notice of swimming start dates. Students work on obtaining their Dutch A, B and C diplomas. The program includes four main elements: stroke work, water safety, pool games and activities, and basic life-saving skills. Students who have already received their diplomas work with Mr. Brown on a more advanced swimming program.

Parents should send an email to the principal to excuse their child from a particular activity in the case of an illness. Please refer to the Attendance and Health information in the Procedures section to determine if your child should attend school.

Music

Students develop broad musical skills in a social context in order to feel competent and motivated to participate in varied musical activities. The emphasis is on group singing and instrument playing, while the students are also introduced to analysis, improvisation and composition. A variety of instruments are used throughout the grade levels. Grade 1-3 students learn to play percussion instruments and the xylophone. In grade 4, students learn to play a recorder in class. Grade 5 students learn to play a band instrument, which can be rented from the school. All students participate in class and school-wide concerts held throughout the school year.

Technology Integration at AISR

AISR believes in the importance of our students being digitally literate to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. To ensure our students have the skills they require, we offer an integrated technology program that is guided by the ISTE standards. Our students are given a rich learning experience that is enhanced by technology. Our teachers and students are given in class technology coaching to enhance all areas of the curriculum.

As part of our approach to the use of technology, we also focus on promoting the necessary skills to navigate today's digital world; Digital citizenship guides students in safe and appropriate ways to use technology and the internet. Digital literacy, supports students as they move into the realms of online communication, social media and the recognition of authentic and balanced journalism. Programming is implemented from PK1, with the use of robotics and a coding program.

[ISTE Standards](#), [Common Sense Digital Literacy](#)

MAP Testing

The school administers standardized and individual tests to aid in individualizing instruction, evaluating the educational development of students, identifying those needing support, working on program and curriculum development, and helping pupils make educational choices which coincide with their academic strengths.

The school administers Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) two to three times during the academic school year. Students in grades 1-5 are tested in math and reading. Students in grades 3-5 are also tested on Language usage. Teachers use the growth and achievement data from MAP to develop targeted instructional strategies and to plan school improvement.

Reporting Student Progress

A student's progress and achievement are reported to parents through the use of formal and informal conferences as well as through progress reports and report cards (distributed online via the parent portal). An open house information session and parent-teacher conferences are scheduled on the school calendar available on the school [website](#).

Please Note: Report cards and/or progress reports may be withheld pending payment of financial obligations, including tuition fees, lost or damaged books/ equipment, and library fees.

Field Trips and Excursions

Parental permission is given for participation in field trips at the time of enrollment. A notice regarding the field trips is sent home to parents by teachers prior to each excursion. All field trip arrangements and schedules are approved by the Principal in advance.

School transportation, if available, is used. On all school-sponsored trips involving students, provision is made for proper supervision by school employees. Parents may be asked to assist in such supervision. Parents are asked to pick up their children at school if the students arrive back at school after 15:05.

Gardening Program

Grade 3 students are involved with a gardening program sponsored by the City of Rotterdam. The program is instructed by a horticulturist at off-site school gardening plots. Students learn about gardening with a hands-on program of planting and tending to their crops in the spring. In the fall, grade 4 students harvest the crops they planted in grade 3.

Homework

Our primary focus for all elementary homework is based on developing literacy skills, particularly increasing stamina in reading. Being able to read and appropriately respond to a variety of texts

(including reading mathematical and scientific language) serves as a foundation for all academic work. Teachers may also assign online or other activities designed to revise and reinforce content already covered in class. This will vary from grade to grade.

We strive to limit homework to appropriate amounts based on the student's age, which roughly translates (in terms of minutes) to the grade level multiplied by 10. For example, a student in 3rd grade should spend (on average) approximately 30 minutes daily on homework in total. All homework is handed out on a Monday and returned the following Monday in class.

Students in Kindergarten-Grade Five must complete the "Daily Reading Challenge" as part of their literacy homework. There is no formal homework in Pre-K1 and Pre-K2. However, as a parent there are many activities that you can do at home which support your child's learning. Please see the section, 'How Parents Can Help' on Page 10 to see what sorts of things you can do to support the development of your child.

Please note that there is no assigned homework during weekends and holidays.

How Parents Can Help

There are many ways you can improve your child's attitude toward learning. These include:

- setting an example
- making learning fun
- showing why it is important to learn
- letting your child choose what they want to learn
- and, most importantly, helping your child if they are struggling with school.

Lead by Example: Children often look to their parents when they form their habits. In order for your child to enjoy learning, you yourself must set a good example. Read in front of your child or you could read a book with them. You could enroll yourself in our school library to borrow adult or children's books, or watch educational TV shows such as those on BBC, Animal Planet or the Discovery Channel. Taking family trips to museums and Internet searches together are also ways you can learn together as a family. By making an increased effort to continue your learning, you are showing your child that education is a life-long and important habit. Additionally, sharing your childhood school experiences with your kids might be inspirational. Telling them about the fun projects you did in elementary school might prompt their ideas.

Explore Your Child's Interests: Children should also be allowed to learn various skills and areas that interest them. Ask your child if they have an interest in learning anything particular. It's important to know your child's interests so that you can maximize their curiosity towards a subject. Enrolling your child in after-school sports or music lessons can also reinforce the idea that learning does not just happen in school. Setting aside a weekly family time for an educational experience (such as going to a petting zoo, or visiting a local attraction) may also be a good idea. Occasionally, allow your child the opportunity to decide how to spend this time, to give them some power over directing their own learning.

Help Your Children if They are Struggling: Our aim is to provide a safe, yet challenging learning environment for your child. The best way to achieve this is through open communication about how your child is finding the learning environment, and experiencing the educational programs. At AISR we have an 'open door policy', meaning that it is possible to make an appointment with your child's teacher at any time during the school year. The best way to do this is usually by email. If you believe that your child is struggling with any aspect of school life, please do not hesitate to make an appointment to talk about this with your child's teacher. They should be your first point of contact rather than the administration. It is important to keep an open mind and listen to the teacher's perspective. Often a child's troubles can be quite differently described from another point of view. We always take parent and student concerns seriously and will work to avoid problems escalating.

STUDENT SERVICES

Library

The AISR library serves the AISR community. Families are invited to come and read with their children. The AISR community is also welcome to use the library computers. The library hours are from Monday-Friday 8:00-15:30.

Parents are welcome to have their own library card. The best times to visit are first thing in the morning or towards the end of the school day.

Library Classes

During library time, students are read an interactive story and/or practice informational and research skills, and choose a book(s) to borrow. Elementary students have scheduled classes in the library once a week. Students in Pre-K1 begin their weekly visits in the second month of school.

Library Books

We strongly encourage parents to read/browse the library books with their child in addition to class time in the library.

The number of books a student is allowed to borrow depends on his/her grade:

Pre-K1-PreK2	1 book
Kindergarten	2 books
Grades 1-2	3 books
Grades 3-5	5 books

The Online Library Catalog (Access-IT) can be browsed online at:

<https://secure.aisr.nl/library/guestmenu.jsp>

Library books must be returned within 2 weeks or renewed for further reading. Overdue notices are sent out monthly. Please help your child locate any missing book(s). Invoices will be sent home for very late or lost books to cover any replacement costs. If any books are found after a payment has been made, a reimbursement will be issued.

Library Bags

Library bags are provided for each student when they enter AISR. In order to keep library books in great condition for current and future AISR students, there is a **No Bag, No Book** procedure for all elementary students. If a child does not bring their bag to school (even if they have their book to return), they will not be allowed to check out a new book.

The library is committed to doing its best to reach and inspire every reader. Other activities may include English Book Fairs, Author Skypes and various activities to promote and celebrate reading.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

EAL support is available for all students in Grades K-5 whose first language is not English and need additional language support because of their language background. The EAL program at the American International School of Rotterdam (AISR) provides the support students need to be successful in the English-speaking environment of AISR. The curriculum at AISR is built upon students' cultural and language experiences within an intercultural learning environment. Classroom teachers differentiate in the classroom to help EAL students develop both their academic and English skills according to their needs and abilities.

Goals of the EAL Program:

- To provide academic support for non-native speakers of English
- To provide balanced instruction in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking

- To provide an environment which promotes self-esteem and independence
- To provide advice to parents on how to support language learning

Learning Support

AISR provides a variety of learning support services tailored to fit individual needs. Provisions for students who require support are identified in four tiers:

Tier 0

Tier 0 students are students who have been reviewed by the Student Services Team (SST) and identified as being in need of basic classroom-based interventions and progress monitoring, but may not be appropriate for direct Learning Support services. These students may receive an intervention plan with objectives that will be tracked and monitored. Progress monitoring will be conducted as determined by the Student Services Team. Follow-up meetings with the Student Services Team will occur at this level after 6-8 weeks of intervention. If no progress on the identified objectives have been made, then the Student Support Team will review the case and the child may become eligible for Tier 1 services.

Tier 1

Tier 1 students are students who have been reviewed and evaluated by the Student Services Team (SST) and/or outside professionals and determined that extra Learning Support is needed to ensure a proper educational program. Evaluations may include academic achievement assessments (WISC, Woodcock Johnson III) or behavior rating scales (ADHD screeners). These students will be instructed using the grade level curriculum with an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) to monitor improvement.

Tier 2

Tier 2 students have been evaluated by a professional psychologist, Head of Learning Support, or prior Learning Support specialist and are determined to require more comprehensive Learning Support Services. From an evaluation by the Student Services Team, it is also determined that these students' difficulties are not primarily based on social emotional issues, lack of prior educational opportunities, or a language learning difficulty. At the time of consideration of admissions, the student may or may not carry a label of a specific disability, but reports indicate concerns that impede learning to a degree that the child is not able to be successful in the general education classroom without Learning Support assistance. These students may be 1-2 years behind in 2-3 core subject areas, require behavioral intervention, or a modified curriculum that will be outlined in the child's Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) provided through the Learning Support Department.

Tier 3

Tier 3 is for students, regardless of a diagnosis, who require intensive Learning Support services and who may be 2 or more years below grade level in several subject areas and/or require intense behavioral support as documented in their comprehensive evaluations. Their academic struggle may be attributed to lower cognitive ability, social emotional issues, or a specific diagnosis. It can not be attributed to lack of prior educational opportunities or a language learning difficulty. These students will use a modified curriculum as stated in their ILP and/or require the support of the school psychologist. The ILP and /or behavioral intervention plans will be provided through the Learning Support Department along with any recommendations from the child's psychologist.

Learning Support Grading

Regular/Mainstream Courses: In general, the students who receive learning support services on Tier 0 or Tier 1 are graded by their classroom teachers just as they would grade any of their other students in the class. This is the case unless the child has a Tier 2 or 3 plan and modifications are noted in their Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Modified Courses: The Learning Support department works with the classroom teachers to input modified grades for students in Tier 2 or 3. Modified grades are noted with the # mark in our online reporting system, PowerSchool, and on report cards.

General Courses: Courses that are described as “General” are courses that have a modified curriculum to tailor the needs of the students in the learning support program. These classes are typically taught in a small group setting and are instructed at the level of the student’s understanding. A “#” is not typically indicated on the report card for General Courses, unless the students’ needs were to a degree that even a modified course needed to be adjusted to the student’s learning ability.

Medical Office

The health and well being of our students are a primary concern. The medical office is open throughout the school day from 8:00-16:00, where a qualified nurse is available. Students who need to seek medical attention or advice must first check with their classroom teacher. Parents will be notified in the event that a student needs to return home due to illness or cases of emergency. From time to time, students may need over-the-counter medications such as paracetamol. In these cases, the medical office will request parent permission. The school nurse determines whether the student should return to class or go home. If the student needs to go home, the nurse contacts the parents or guardian for him/her to be picked up.

Parents must inform the medical office if their child is taking medication so it may be properly administered and monitored. Medications must be handed in to the medical office. The classroom teacher and school nurse need to be informed of any relevant health problems such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc. If your child uses specific medicine (inhalers, epipen, etc.) for an ongoing health condition (asthma, allergies, epilepsy etc.), it is necessary to supply the medical office with this medicine.

At the beginning of the new school year or upon arrival to the school, health forms must be completed and on file in the medical office. If there is any change in circumstance during the school year, for example vaccination update, new allergies, change in medical status, the medical office should be informed.

The health of all students is important. Therefore, the school asks that you follow the guidelines: Please do not bring your child to school if any of the conditions below occur:

- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Temperature above 100.4 F or 38C
- Skin or eye irritation
- *Excessive* runny nose

Please make sure your child is well enough to return to school after an illness. Your child should be free of fever without medication and/or without diarrhea and vomiting for at least 24 hours before coming back to school.

Cafeteria

AISR provides the option to purchase a school lunch for your child. Each day, a hot meal or sandwich is offered, or you may choose to send a lunch from home. The cafeteria operates 5 days a week to provide a nutritious meal for students. The lunch program is optional for all students. Students participating in the hot lunch program need to have a lunch ticket, which may be purchased from the cafeteria. Each ticket is good for 10 lunches and milk. There is also a sandwich option for those students who do not want a hot lunch. Lunch cards are put on the class table in the cafeteria prior to lunch each day. Please contact the cafeteria regarding the purchase of lunch cards. **Students in Pre-K1-grade 5 may not purchase cookies, candies, etc. during the school day.**

Parents are notified approximately 3 days prior to a lunch ticket expiring. If any unused lunches or milk remain on the ticket at the end of the year, a refund will be made or the ticket can be used the following year.

Cafeteria Rules

The rules for the cafeteria are very simple. Parents can also practice these rules with their child/children at home. Students are asked to:

- sit at their appropriate table
- talk quietly
- stay seated while they are eating their lunch
- go to recess only when instructed by the duty teacher in the cafeteria

Healthy Snack Policy

All students need to bring a healthy snack and a drink from home for their morning recess. The morning snack is not included in the lunch ticket. We ask that you do not send candy, chips, chocolate, cookies or soft drinks with your child but, instead, provide healthy snacks for them to eat such as fruit, granola bars, or carrot sticks, etc., along with juice or milk to drink.

Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 Lunch

Note: Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 students eat lunch in their classroom where there is a chance to practice table manners and have quiet conversation. A lunch brought from home should include a sandwich, healthy snacks such as fruit, and/or vegetables and a drink (no candy, chips, chocolate, cookies or soft drinks allowed).

Transportation

All school and contracted buses have seat belts for student safety. Parents are reminded to be sure that their child is aware of the need to have seat belts fastened at all times and to obey the directions of the driver. Buses will only carry the number of passengers for which the bus was designed.

The prime concern of the school is safe transport to and from school. Each student is entitled to have a safe, comfortable and pleasant ride between home and school. To achieve this goal, there must be cooperation on the part of parents, teachers, drivers and the students.

Riding the buses is a privilege and not a right. If a child does not obey the rules of the bus, uses inappropriate language/behavior or is habitually late in the morning or afternoon, the bus riding privilege may be revoked.

In cases where students do not exhibit expected behavior, the following actions will be taken:

- The student will be warned, and the student's parents will be notified.
- Further occurrences of unacceptable behavior will result in suspension of the student's bus riding privilege.
- Continued unacceptable behavior may result in a total loss of transportation privileges.
- In extreme cases, a student's bus privilege may be suspended without prior warning.

Any questions or concerns regarding the bus transportation policy should be addressed to the transportation coordinator at transportation@aisr.nl.

Parents must inform the transportation coordinator **prior to 9:00 a.m.** for any changes in their normal afternoon route on transportation@aisr.nl.

In the event of a bus breakdown or delay along the route, the driver will, as quickly as possible, notify the school office via mobile phone so appropriate steps may be taken to ensure the prompt and safe arrival of the students.

Students will not be left at an unattended home. If a parent or guardian is not at home when a child is dropped off, the driver will return the student to school, and the parents are then responsible for collecting their child.

Please remind your child not to leave books or personal belongings on the bus. Students are requested not to eat or drink on the bus.

PROCEDURES

Morning Drop-Off

Pre-K1 and Pre-K2

At the beginning of the year, Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 parents are allowed to accompany their children into the building once the bell sounds at 08:10. In the second semester, the students are able to wait outside and line up until their teacher comes to the playground at 8:10 to collect them. At this time, the children should come inside *without* their parents.

Once the children have come inside, they hang up their coats and unpack their bags **independently**. They change their shoes according to the need for the day. We encourage the children to sign themselves up for a school lunch if needed and to put their bags in the appropriate places. This builds their self-confidence and independence.

Kindergarten-Grade 5

Kindergarten-grade 5 students may be dropped off at the playground in the back at the school between 7:50-8:10 (Note: There is no supervision for students prior to 7:50). The 8:10 bell will signal students to line up with their classes. We ask parents to refrain from taking their children to the classroom.

Afternoon Pick-Up

Pre-K1 and Pre-K2

At the end of the school day, parents collect their children from the classroom.

Kindergarten

At the end of the school day, Kindergarten students will be released to parents in the cafeteria.

Grade 1-Grade 5

At the end of the school day, parents collect their children from the playground.

Students are not allowed to play unattended or use the playground equipment unless supervised. Students may not roam the school on their own.

Parents should be prompt when collecting children after school or after-school activities. If your child is being picked up from school by someone else on a particular day, it is very important that the classroom teacher is informed beforehand.

Rain Days and Inclement Weather

From time to time, the weather makes it uncomfortable for students to be outside before school begins. On rainy days, students are asked to first hang up their school bags and coats. Then they change into their indoor shoes and proceed to the gym.

Leaving School Grounds

For the safety of the students, at no time may any elementary student leave school grounds during the school day without a parent or guardian collecting them at the school. Please try to schedule appointments outside of the school day. Taking children out of school early disrupts the educational process and is inconvenient for everyone involved. The school highly discourages this practice.

Minimum Attendance Policy

Attendance at school is important. Students are expected to be at school on time each morning. All absences and tardies are documented. Minimum attendance is set at 85% of the number school days in a given year. Student absences from school are recorded regardless of the reason (i.e. illness, travel with teams/clubs, family matters, etc.). All absences count toward the minimum

attendance calculations. Students absent for more than 15% of the classes are at risk of having to repeat the grade.

The Elementary Principal periodically reviews absences and tardies for each student. A letter of warning is sent when a student approaches the maximum limit of allowances. The student's pattern of attendance and reasons for absence are important considerations in this review. Reasonable explanations for the absences may include extended illness, family emergency, or attendance at school-approved activities.

Absence Due to Illness

It is the responsibility of the parents to contact the school between 07:45 and 08:30 if a student is going to be absent on that day. **Only parents may verify a student's absence.** An email should be sent to attendance@aisr.nl.

The health of all students is important. Therefore, the school asks that you follow the guidelines: Please do not bring your child to school if any of the conditions below occur:

- Diarrhea and/ or vomiting
- Temperature above 100.4 F or 38 C
- *Excessive* fatigue
- Skin or eye irritation
- *Excessive* runny nose

Please make sure your child is well enough to return to school after an illness. Your child should be free of fever without medication and/or without diarrhea and vomiting for at least 24 hours before coming back to school.

Absence Due to Vacations

It is important that parents contemplating a vacation arrange the time when it coincides with the vacation period of our school calendar. **No student is allowed more than five (5) school days per year for the purpose of family holiday.** The following procedure must be followed if requesting pre-arranged absences:

- Parents send an email request to the Principal to be excused for a holiday. For students in Grades 1-5, the Principal then gives the parent a prearranged absence form.
- The prearranged absence form is returned to the Principal at least three school days before the scheduled vacation. On this form, a plan is developed which identifies the missed schoolwork that is to be made up.
- The Principal makes the final decision on any vacation absence.
- Students absent for more than 15% of the classes may be required to repeat the grade.

Tardies

We encourage parents to ensure that their children are on time for school. Coming to school late is both embarrassing for your child and inconvenient for everyone involved. Students who are tardy for classes in the morning on a regular basis are usually late as a result of parents not understanding the consequences. What parents may not realize is that late students interrupt the class, frustrate the teachers, bother other students and cause an inconvenience to the office staff because they must account for all tardies.

It is important for you to note that if after several attempts to encourage parents to deliver their children on time, the problem is not resolved, we will contact the parents to arrange an appointment with the principal.

Hopefully, these policies will create a positive climate in which students are able to grow and learn in a manner that best suits their individual personalities and also enables them to learn the importance of responsible habits and attitudes.

Retention

The school believes that all possible effort needs to be made by the school and the parents to ensure that students are properly placed. When academic or developmental questions arise, the school will inform parents of these problems and assist the parents in developing an action plan for their child.

There may be cases when the school questions the appropriateness of a student moving on to the next grade. If this occurs the homeroom teacher will refer the student's case to the administration for review. They will conduct a series of tests as well as collect information regarding the child's present performance. This information will be reviewed and a decision will be made. The policies listed below are in effect with regard to retention.

Kindergarten and Grade 1

If a child has been referred for retention in Kindergarten or Grade 1, the teacher must explain the concern to the parent in a parent-teacher conference, but the school will make the final placement decision which will be binding.

Grades 1-5

Research and experience have proven that retention beyond grade 1 is not preferred by most experts in the field. Referrals for retention beyond Grade 1 will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Home/School Communication

Communication between home and school is vital. Therefore, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher via e-mail if they have any questions. *We ask that parents respect the schedules of teachers, educational assistants, and students, and not interrupt them while they are in class.*

Emergency Closing

The Director/Principal is authorized to announce the closing of school if actual or potential hazards threaten the safety and well being of students or employees. The decision to close the school shall be made by the Director/Principal upon consultation with members and/or the Chair of the Board (when feasible), professional staff, and/or other community agencies responsible for the safety and well being of the community.

Parents will be notified prior to school closing. Information will also be available on the school website and the school's Facebook page.

Changes in parent contact information should be reported in a timely manner to the school office and classroom teacher.

Theft/Stealing

AISR strongly believes in respecting the property and possessions of students and school personnel. The school has a right to search a student and his/her possessions if there is a reasonable suspicion that he/she has committed a theft. The administration urges students not to bring valuables, such as expensive watches or electronic equipment, or large amounts of money to school because these items are the most common targets of theft. Stealing will result in a student being suspended for up to 3 days. Repeated offenses or major incidents of theft may lead to expulsion. Full restitution is required prior to returning to regular class and only after a parent conference.

Harassment

Harassment on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability in any form will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures, or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials, or pictures derogatory to either gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, or disabled individuals or groups. Students who believe they are the victims of harassment

should report the conduct to appropriate staff/administrators. Procedures to resolve the problem will then begin as soon as possible. The parents of both students will be contacted by the school. No student will be subject to any form of coercion, intimidation, retaliation, or discrimination for reporting harassment. Any student who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment of a member of the school community will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including detention, suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

Electronic Games/Mobile Phones

Students are asked to leave any electronic games and mobile phones at home. If a child brings a phone to school, it will be held by the teacher and given back to the child at the end of the day. ***Students are not permitted to use mobile phones during school hours.*** Parents and students should discuss any after school activities before leaving for school.

The School cannot be held responsible for any lost personal electronic items.

Birthday Party Procedure

A pleasant Dutch custom for the “birthday boy or girl” is to provide a little treat for the class on their birthday. Students are welcome to adopt this tradition if they wish. Please contact the teacher if you would like to hold a party in the classroom. This will be at the teacher’s discretion, due to schedules and potential academic interruptions.

The school asks that printed invitations for birthday parties held outside of school be distributed at school only if invitations are given to all students in the class. Please note: Teachers are not able to send email invitations to parents.

Lost and Found

Students who find lost articles are asked to return them to the office. Valuable articles will be kept under lock and key until they are claimed. Less expensive, more commonly lost articles will be placed in the lost and found area next to the changing rooms in the gym.

Clothing for a Busy Day

It is essential that you dress your child so that he/she will be comfortable for a range of activities during the day. Please consider the following advice carefully to support us with our program.

- Do not wear too many layers. The school building is kept warm inside. An undershirt, shirt and one jumper/sweater are enough, even in the winter.
- Please label any clothing that the children may be likely to take off during the day. For example, hats, gloves, jackets, shoes, sweaters and cardigans.

We expect that the children may have to change their shoes several times during the day. They must have:

1. a pair of outdoor shoes
2. a pair of indoor shoes (with non-marking soles for P.E. lessons) and
3. a pair of rubber boots for wet days

Therefore, please only send them to school in shoes that fasten with Velcro, buckles or zips to ensure quick and easy changing.

Unless good weather is guaranteed, please send your child to school in a waterproof coat with a hood. Fresh air and exercise are important for your child. Therefore, we will go outside even if it is raining.

Withdrawal During the School Year

Students withdrawing from AISR must complete the following procedures:

- Obtain a withdrawal form from the office at least two weeks prior to the intended withdrawal date.
- Have his/her parents fill out their part of the form, which includes the reason for the withdrawal and the specific date of withdrawal.
- The student's teachers and the librarian must sign the form denoting that all books and materials have been returned. The student will be billed for any unreturned books or materials.
- The school office can issue copies of report cards, progress reports etc. if required.

Yearbooks

Yearbooks will be available at the end of the academic year. Yearbooks may be withheld pending payment of financial obligations, including tuition fees, lost or damaged books/equipment, and library fees.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

House Teams

Many of our celebrations will be celebrated in our House Teams. Each child (and their siblings) belongs to one of four House Teams – Earth (green), Air (white), Fire (red), Water (blue). Students from across every grade level in both Early Learning and Elementary School make up each House Team. Throughout the school year, special activities will be organized for House Teams to cooperatively participate together.

The following is a list of some of the celebrations that may be organized for this school year:

October:	Halloween
November:	Thanksgiving
December:	Sinterklaas, Winter Concert, Christmas Tree Lighting
February:	Valentine's Day
March:	Pink Shirt Day
March/April:	Easter
April:	King's Day
June:	Sports Day

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student Council

The Elementary School is one of the important first steps in a lifelong journey of learning. Students learn vital skills that will prepare them for advanced learning later in their education. An Elementary School Student Council presents a unique opportunity for young students to learn organization, leadership and teamwork skills and prepares them for later student government positions. The main goal is to provide activities for the Elementary students both inside and outside the school day, for example:

- Movie afternoons
- Games
- School dances
- Spirit days or weeks
- Talent shows
- Fundraising events

Co-Curricular Program

The American International School of Rotterdam (AISR) offers an excellent after-school program that includes opportunities for students to join a number of sports teams, participate in band or choir, as well as participate in a number of fun clubs and activities that allow students to learn new skills or develop existing ones. The ***Co-Curricular Handbook***, which is available on our website from September each year, contains details of all Skill Development Sessions, After-School Clubs and Activities that we offer at AISR this year.

Sports

Students in grades 4 and 5 are eligible to participate on the AISR U12 sports teams competing in the NECIS sports league. Information about interschool competitions will be supplied by the AISR Athletic Director at the beginning of each season. Other sporting opportunities can be found in the ***Co-Curricular Handbook***.