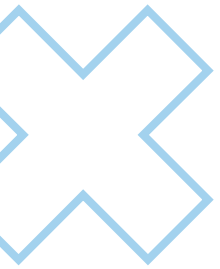


AMSTERDAM

INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNITY

SCHOOL



A I C S

SCHOOLPLAN

2021/2025



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 03

Foreword

## 04

**1 Introduction**

## 05

**2 Purpose and direction**

5 Purpose

6 Direction

## 08

**3 The history and the future of the AICS**

8 Development of the AICS in four phases

12 Information about Campuses and buildings

## 13

**4 Governance, leadership and organisation**

13 The Esprit School group

13 The organisation of the AICS

14 AICS Organogram

15 IT Applications

16 Partnerships

16 Finance policy and sponsoring policy

## 17

**5 The framework for the educational development of the AICS**

17 The International Baccalaureate

17 The Council of International Schools

19 The Esprit School group

## 21

**6 The curriculum**

21 The primary curriculum

22 The Secondary curriculum

24 The Diploma programme

28 Language Learning

28 The role of the library

## 29

**7 Teaching and assessing for learning**

29 Teaching

31 Assessing for Learning

## 34

**8 Students' learning and well-being**

34 Open Learning Environment

35 Student support

37 Safe and Healthy Environment

## 39

**9 School staffing**

39 Policies and procedures

39 Recruitment and induction of staff

40 Staff profile

40 Professional development

## 41

**10 Quality assurance**

42 Internal Feedback from stakeholders

42 Internal analysis of results

43 External benchmarking

44 External accreditation

## 45

**Appendix 1: General Information**

## 46

**Appendix 2: School policies**

## 47

**Appendix 3: Abbreviations**



# FOREWORD

In this school plan you find an outline of our vision for the development of the school in the coming four years, and beyond. This school plan has been created in the context of dynamic growth, in student numbers and in educational ambitions.

This school plan is written on the basis of input from a broad range of stakeholders students, parents, staff, the International Baccalaureate and the Council of International Schools and the Executive Board of the Esprit Schools. The input was received through various means, including but not exclusive to, reports, surveys, conversations, workshops and relevant documentation.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the production of this school plan.

Rynette de Villiers

*Principal*

Amsterdam International Community School



# 1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we explain how this document has been produced; and the purpose and structure of the document.

## How was this document produced?

A four-year school plan is, in the context of the Dutch educational system, an obligatory document. For the AICS, the production of this document is a welcome opportunity to reflect on our purpose and direction, and make plans for the longer-term future. The production of the document also forms part of our preparation for the upcoming combined accreditation visit of the International Baccalaureate and the Council of International Schools.

*In producing this document, we have incorporated feedback from the following sources:*

- ✘ The accreditation visit of the International Baccalaureate in 2017;
- ✘ The preparatory evaluation report of the Council of International Schools in 2019;
- ✘ The outcome of the community survey from the Council of International Schools in 2019;
- ✘ The outcome of the employee survey conducted in the spring of 2020.
- ✘ The outcome of our discussions about the AICS values and how to implement them with students, parents and staff during study days and other meetings in the school year 2019-2020.

The document was written by the school leadership, with feedback from the Participation Council. The plan has been approved by the Executive Board of the Esprit School Group and is aligned with the Education Manifesto (the strategic vision of the Esprit School Group).

## What is the purpose of this document?

*The purpose of this document is threefold:*

- ✘ To reflect on our purpose and direction for the coming years;
- ✘ To make concrete commitments which will guide us in our quest for improvement in the coming years;
- ✘ To explain to all our stakeholders our purpose, direction and plans for improvement in the coming years.

## How is this document structured?

- ▶ In chapter 3 we describe the history and the future plans for the growth of the AICS.
- ▶ In chapter 4 we describe the broader framework for the educational development of the AICS.
- ▶ In chapter 5 we describe the direction and purpose of the school.
- ▶ In chapter 6 we describe our plans for development and improvement of our curriculum.
- ▶ In chapter 7 we describe our plans for development of teaching and assessing for learning.
- ▶ In chapter 8 we describe our plans for development and improvement of students' learning and well-being.
- ▶ In chapter 9 we describe our plans to further develop the quality of our staff.
- ▶ In chapter 10 we explain the organisation of the school.
- ▶ In chapter 11 we explain our approach to quality assurance.



## 2 PURPOSE AND DIRECTION

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the AICS is explained in our philosophy, values, mission statement and vision statement

#### **Philosophy: Community-based International Learning**

We explain the philosophy behind the Esprit Education Manifesto, and our vision and mission as ‘the education of the international community, in the Dutch and International community, by the Dutch and International Community’. Our students acquire all the necessary academic skills while learning about themselves, their community, and the international world.

*We aim to:*

- ✘ Enable students and staff to achieve their full potential (talent development);
- ✘ Create an accessible, diverse, caring learning environment and display respect for people from all backgrounds (global citizenship);
- ✘ Develop high quality, meaningful and accessible approaches to (team-) teaching and learning, producing clearly documented outcomes which are held up against officially approved benchmarks (professional and result-oriented);
- ✘ Creatively use and add to the experience of living in the Amsterdam and Dutch community (entrepreneurship).



#### **The values of the AICS**

At the AICS, we work from important values: community, inquiry, diversity and integrity. These values embody who we are and they are the starting point for the development towards our goals.

Our goal is to provide our students with the highest possible quality of teaching and learning. We think that the core of educational quality is in the interaction between the teacher and the student and that it consists of five components:

- ✘ Inspiring educators;
- ✘ A written, aligned and concept-based curriculum including outcomes;
- ✘ Inquiry-based learning;
- ✘ Consistency in essential day-to-day learning methodologies, resources and assessment tools;
- ✘ A shared curiosity in things we do not understand.

#### **Mission statement**

The AICS facilitates high quality, accessible, community-based international learning for students of all nationalities living in The Netherlands.



### **Vision statement**

To be a community where learning is at the heart of everything we do.

*Support for our philosophy, values, mission and vision*

In discussion with students, parents we concluded that the philosophy, values, mission and vision as formulated in earlier years stand the test of time and should guide our school in the coming years. Sustainability was added as an important focus point for the coming years.

### **DIRECTION**

*Our direction is twofold:*

#### **Dynamic growth**

As shown in chapter 3 the school will experience a dynamic growth in the coming years – from 1600 students to approximately 2600 students. We will move to two state-of-the-art campuses – Main in A.J. Ernststraat and South East in Bijlmerplein (Sandcastle). Both campuses will offer primary and secondary education and all four IB programmes.

#### **Improvement of education**

In the context of this dynamic growth, we will remain one school with multiple campuses, a school that constantly strives to improve the quality of the learning and working environment. To that end, we will strengthen our curriculum and our teaching and learning by becoming one of approximately 40 schools in the world which offer the full IB continuum of programmes (PYP, MYP, CP and DP).

We believe that developing and implementing the full IB continuum of programmes will strengthen the vertical articulation between primary and secondary education and the horizontal articulation between our three campuses.

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE FOR THE COMING YEARS?**

#### **Community**

To strengthen the sense of community which our students, parents and staff experience we will work to improve:

#### **The sense of community within the school**

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Improving our reception of new students and parents and staff, so that they feel more welcomed and supported;
- ✘ Extending school assemblies to the secondary department.
- ✘ Stimulate collaboration and communication between campuses by organising combined Inset Days for all staff;
- ✘ Strengthening our CAS (creativity, action, service) and Service programmes.
- ✘ Working together with the Melting Pot<sup>1</sup> to provide more opportunities for the whole community to interact.

*Integration with the local community.*

**‘Community is a keystone in our mission and vision’**

<sup>1</sup> The Melting Pot is a group of parents who, together with the school, organise activities for the community. We are grateful to have an active Melting Pot at each of our three campuses.



*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Continuing to actively seek opportunities to work together with organisations in the local community and to involve our students in the local and global community.

Examples of this in primary education are that we work together with organisations which specialize in arts and nature education.

Examples of this in secondary education that we reach out to the local and global community in the context of the IB core curriculum through service learning, participation in local, national and international projects, arts, design and language learning.

### **Diversity**

With more than 70 different nationalities within students, parents and staff in one school it is essential that we continue to build the cultural competence of our community, that we embrace these differences and are curious about one another whilst being grounded in our culture.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Strengthening attention to the diversity of cultural backgrounds of our students and staff, encouraging them to share their diverse backgrounds;
- ✘ Increasing and improving our celebration of events such as International Language Day, World Day of Cultural Diversity and Diversity Week. Continuing to celebrate diversity.

### **Inquiry**

Inquiry based learning is at the heart of our approach to teaching and learning.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Providing training for all staff to develop a common understanding of inquiry based teaching and learning;
- ✘ Sharing and celebrating good examples of inquiry based teaching and learning across the IB continuum.

### **Integrity**

Integrity, in the sense of being honest, principled and responsible is a given in the context of the IB philosophy and learner profile and the philosophy and mission of the AICS.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Creating one language and vertical articulation from primary through to secondary for the learner profile;
- ✘ Integrating sustainability in our educational programmes, so that our students come to understand its importance, take responsibility and help to build a sustainable future;
- ✘ Strengthening our commitment to being an ECO-school, with the focus on student-led initiatives;
- ✘ Strengthening Global citizenship by developing intercultural competence.



### 3 THE HISTORY AND THE FUTURE OF THE AICS

The Amsterdam International Community School first opened its doors in 2003 with 16 secondary school students.

There was a call for accessible and affordable international education in the Amsterdam area. Neither private international schools nor Dutch government funded schools could meet this demand.

The Amsterdam International Community School started as, and still is, a partially government-funded school, which offers international education in English.

The name of the school is important. From the very beginning the AICS has distinguished itself as a school which offers an international curriculum and at the same time makes connections with the local and national community.

The AICS Primary school started in 2004 with 60 students and the leadership team chose to embrace the International Primary Curriculum as a vehicle to develop their own brand of international education.

The AICS Secondary education was from the beginning (2003) based on the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate. In 2006 we were authorised for the Diploma Programme. In 2008 we were authorised for the Middle Years Programme. Starting in 2020-2021 we will also offer the Career-Related Programme. In the near future we hope to gain accreditation to offer the Primary Years Programme. We will then become the only Dutch International school and one of approximately 40 schools in the world which offer the full IB continuum of programmes (PYP, MYP, CP and DP).



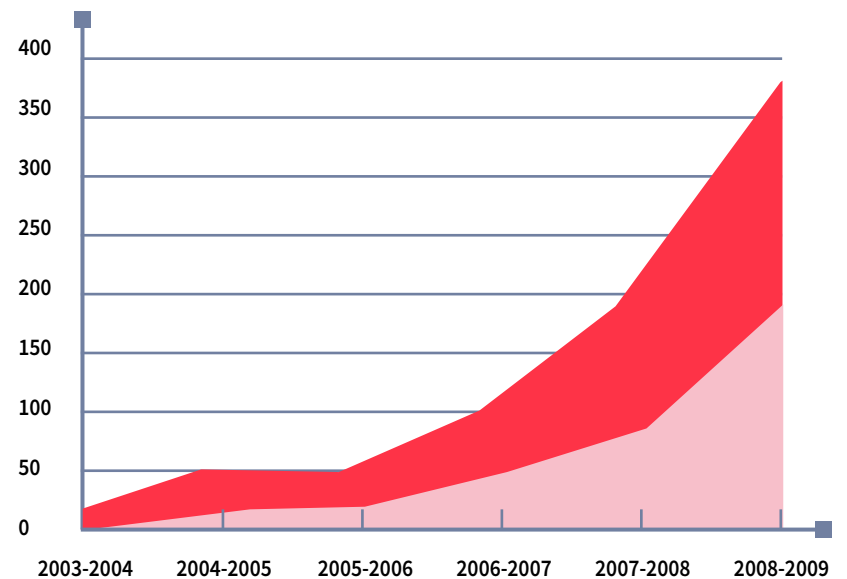
## DEVELOPMENT OF THE AICS IN FOUR PHASES

### Phase 1 The early years

AICS started in 2003 at the Wodanstraat with only 16 secondary MYP students, in 2004 the primary school started with the IPC. The Primary School moved to different locations in 2005 (Hygiëaplein) and 2006 (Uiterwaardenstraat). In 2006 the first DP students started. In 2007 Primary and Secondary schools moved in together again at the Prinses Irenestraat. In 2008 the primary school reached 200 students and the Secondary 150. These were years of lots of moving around and an average growth of 80% or 60 students per year.

AICS STUDENT NUMBERS 2003 - 2009

PRIMARY SECONDARY



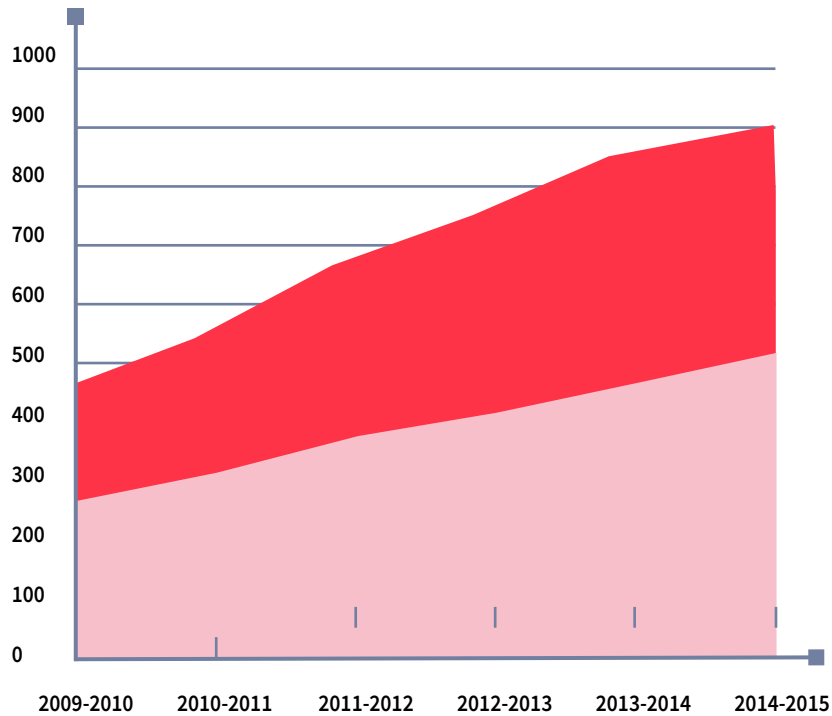


### Phase 2 Steady growth

In this phase the AICS steadily grew at the Prinses Irenestraat campus, expanding within the building. The school grew by around 100 students per year, an average growth of 17%. In 2015 the Primary school reached 500 students and the Secondary 400.

AICS STUDENT NUMBERS 2009 - 2015

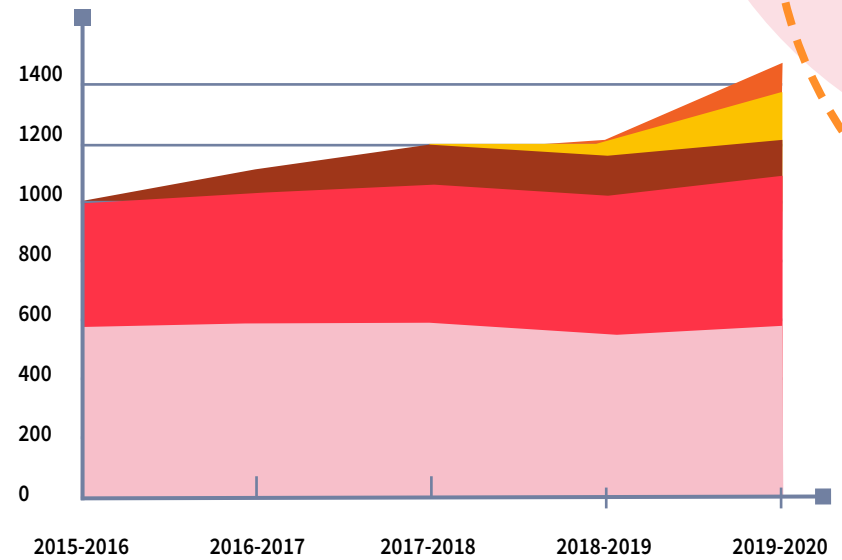
PRIMARY SECONDARY



### Phase 3 Multiple campuses

AICS STUDENT NUMBERS 2015 - 2020

MAIN PRIMARY MAIN SECONDARY SATELITE SOUTH EAST PRIMARY SOUTH EAST SECONDARY



In 2015, it became clear that the AICS would soon reach the maximum capacity of the Prinses Irenestraat campus. In 2016, the city of Amsterdam offered a small second campus at the Arent Janszoon Ernstraat, in a multifunctional centre. That was the start of what we dubbed the Satellite campus. In that same year, the Main (Prinses Irenestraat) campus had more than 1000 students attending. The Satellite campus offers Primary education only and has grown rapidly to almost 200 students in 2020. In 2018, it became clear that the demand for Secondary education could not be met anymore. The city of Amsterdam offered a small third campus at the President Brandstraat to start up both Primary and Secondary education. In 2019, the location changed to a purpose-built temporary building



on the Darlingstraat, in the South East district of Amsterdam. This South East campus grew from around 50 students in 2018 to 250 in 2019. At this campus, Primary education and the Middle Years Programme are offered. In these years there has been lots of moves and setting up of new locations, with an average growth of 10% or 110 students per year. In 2020, the AICS has reached 940 primary students and 760 secondary students, a total of 1700.

### The next phase

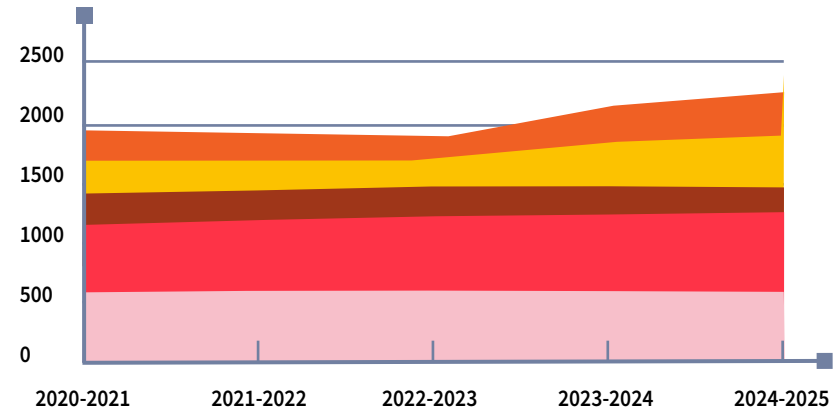
In 2020-2021 the Main campus houses more than 1100 students. By the time we move to the new purpose- built Main campus at the Arent Janszoon Ernststraat in the Spring of 2022, it will have more than 1200 students. From 2020-2021 the Career-related Programme (CP) has been offered at the Main campus. The school currently has candidacy status for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and we hope to receive accreditation to offer the PYP at all campuses in 2021. This makes the AICS an IB continuum school.

From 2020-2021, the Satellite campus offers group 7 for the first time and the building will reach its maximum capacity of around 200 students. In 2021, the first Satellite students will join secondary school at either the Main or South East campuses.

In 2020-2021, the South East campus will offer 14 groups for Primary and 10 groups for Secondary. The Darlingstraat building will then gradually fill up to its maximum capacity of around 500 students. In 2021-2022 the first South East students will join the DP or CP at the main campus. In 2023, the renovated three towers of the “sandcastle” building at the Bijlmerplein will become available. It will then have more than 700 students. The school will either start the first DP group at the SE campus in preparation of the move or at the time of the move. This will depend on the student numbers and the developments around staffing and temporary facilities. The SE campus will grow further to its capacity of around 1300 students.

### AICS STUDENT NUMBERS 2020 - 2025

MAIN PRIMARY MAIN SECONDARY SATELITE  
SOUTH EAST PRIMARY SOUTH EAST SECONDARY



Two major (re)constructions of buildings and two massive moves will take place in these years. We expect the AICS in total to have more than 2000 students in 2023-2024. In 2025 we expect to reach 2300 students. By that time, we will have the capacity in our buildings to continue to grow to a maximum of 3000 students.

We project an average growth of 150 students or 9% per year in the period 2020 -2025. This predicted growth may be affected by COVID-19 developments.



## INFORMATION ABOUT CAMPUSES AND BUILDINGS

### Main

Since 2007, Main has been located in an office building on Prinses Irenestraat 59. In the Spring of 2022 the school will move to a new state of the art school building in A.J. Ernststraat which can accommodate 1200- 1400 students, 600-700 primary students and 600 -700 secondary students.

### Satellite

In 2016 the AICS opened the satellite campus for primary students on A.J. Ernststraat to accommodate the growing demand for international Education. This building is shared with other organisations, including a Dutch primary school. It is not possible to expand the campus, so it will remain a primary school with maximum 10 groups in the coming years. Students who graduate from the Satellite will transfer to Main or to South East.

### South East

The continued rise in demand for international education and the prognosis for future growth in the Amsterdam area led to the decision to establish a new campus in Amsterdam South East. The school opened its doors in

temporary accommodation at President Brandtstraat in August 2018 with 48 students. In August 2019 the school moved to a purpose built temporary building in Darlingstraat. The school now has 300 students and it will grow to approximately 800 students by 2023. The school offers primary education and secondary education up to and including the Middle Years Programme (MYP) year 5. Until the approximate time that the South East campus moves to the Bijlmerplein (Sandcastle), students who graduate from MYP5 will transfer to The Main campus.

In 2023 the school will move to the Sandcastle, an extraordinary office building, which has the status of a modern monument. The building will be renovated to accommodate 1200 – 1400 students, 600 -700 primary students and 600-700 secondary students. When the school moves to the Sandcastle it will offer the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Career-related programme (CP) and the Diploma programme (DP) . Students who graduate from MYP5 will remain at the Sandcastle.

**Click [HERE](#)** for information about current and new AICS buildings.





# 4 GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATION

## THE ESPRIT SCHOOL GROUP

The AICS is a member of the Esprit School group, which consists of 13 primary and secondary schools, which offer a broad range of educational programmes.

The Education Manifesto of the Esprit Schools describes the strategic agenda of the school group. It forms the basis for the policy agenda of the various Esprit schools. In the context of 'good management' and the quality framework, School Heads render account of the results of their policy to the Esprit Governing Board. The Esprit Governing Board in turn renders account to the Esprit Supervisory Board and government authorities.

The AICS is a Dutch subsidised international school. This enables us to deliver high-quality education at competitive fees. The AICS is accountable for high standards to the Inspectorate of the Dutch Ministry of Education.

The AICS is a member of the group of Dutch International Primary and Secondary Schools (DIPS and DISS). The DIPS and DISS cater

for the needs of students with foreign nationalities who will only be spending a few years in the Netherlands, as well as for those Dutch students who need to be educated in an international school to ensure continuity of education.

The AICS is an IB World School. The Learner Profile of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is reflected in our mission statement. The AICS is also a member of the Council of International Schools (CIS). The CIS help us to maintain a Quality Care Cycle in the school and train our staff to answer to the highest quality standards.

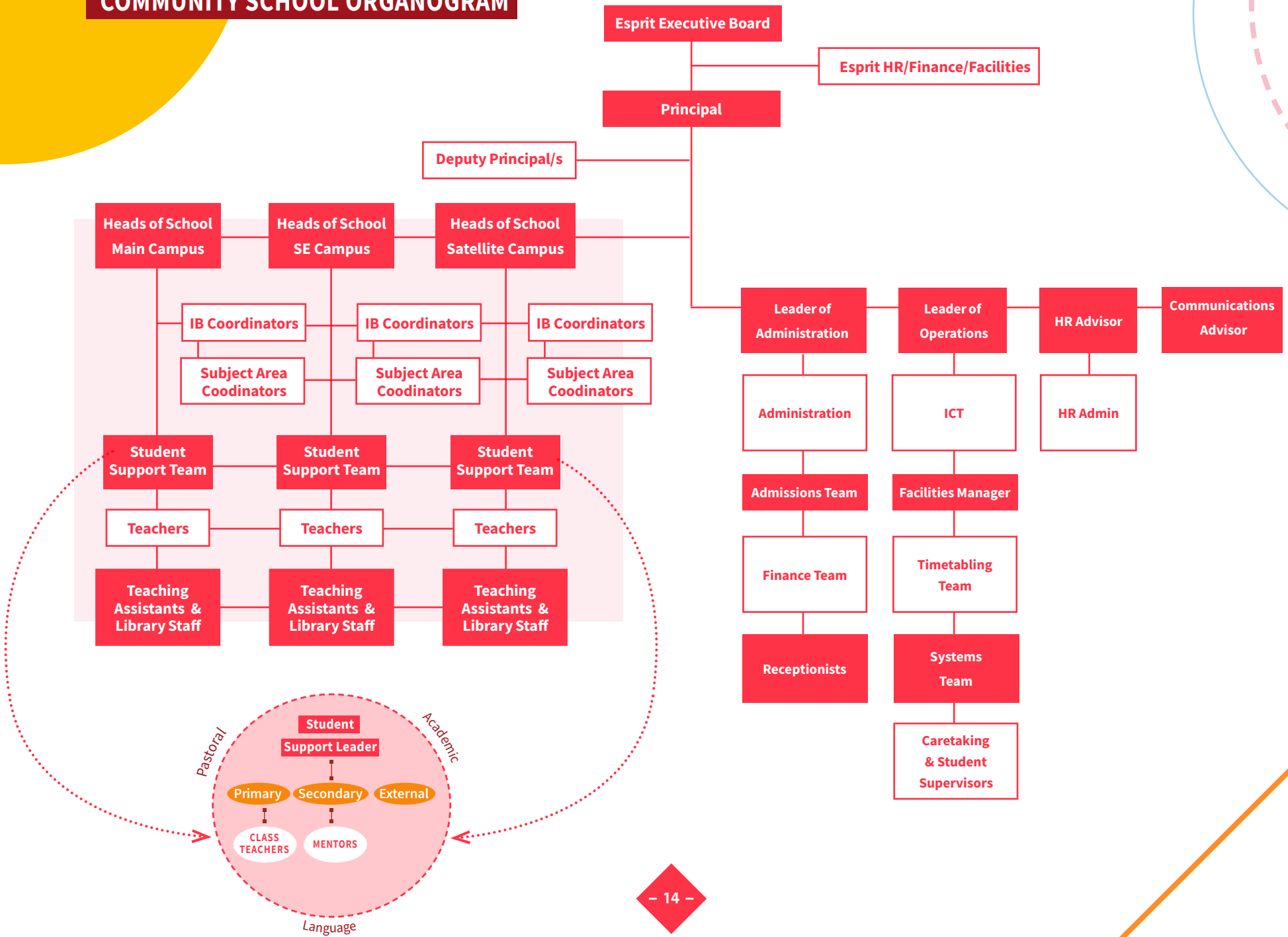


## THE ORGANISATION OF THE AICS

On the following page, you see an overview of the current school organisation. As the school grows and the IB programmes (CP and PYP) are put into place, the school leadership team will review the organisational chart and adapt it to strengthen the role of the IB programme leaders as part of the pedagogical leadership team, to facilitate growth and to provide a structure with clearer end responsibility.



# AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL ORGANOGRAM





## IT APPLICATIONS

An important aspect of the organisation and communication in the school is the use of IT applications. In the last 3 years we have introduced a number of new applications for admissions for student administration, financial administration, etc. This presents the school with a number of challenges:

- ✘ Technical – the applications have to be adapted for the specific needs of the AICS and ‘technical synergy’ between the applications has to be created;
- ✘ Adapting to change – these applications create new ways of working and communicating. All members of the community have to adapt to changes in ways of working and communicating. This presents challenges for all involved, particularly for support staff;
- ✘ Support and communication – staff, students and parents have to be supported in learning to work with these new applications. The communication regarding developments has to be carefully orchestrated.

While we do not have the illusion that we will reach a ‘status quo’ in the coming years our ambition is to improve the ‘customer satisfaction’ as regards the IT applications which support our organisation and communication.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Improving the technical synergy between the applications which we use;
- ✘ Supporting all members of staff in adapting to changes in working and communicating;
- ✘ Improving the communication as regards developments in our IT-applications.
- ✘ Improve the accessibility and quality of hardware available to staff and students.



## **PARTNERSHIPS**

We work closely together with three partner organisations in our school: Cordaan, Partou and Woest Zuid.

Cordaan is an organisation that supports and guides people that are unable to work in regular jobs due to their physical or mental limitations. Their clients work in our staff and student restaurant and help out with caretaking tasks at our Main and South East campus. As a community school we embrace this opportunity to allow everybody to participate. Being inclusive is a given in our diverse community.

At our Main and Satellite campus Partou provides daycare for pre-school children (0-3) They also provide after school care for school going children (4-12), playground supervision and supervision of young students walking to and from sports accommodation. To provide this supervision Partou works with volunteers, many of whom are parents of students at the school. For many of these parents these voluntary activities are a welcome means of connecting with the community.

At all our campuses, Woest Zuid provides extra physical outdoor activities for primary students during their breaks. The Woest Zuid trainers are Physical education teachers in training. At the South East campus Woest Zuid provides after-school care for school going children (4-12).

In the coming years, we intend to continue and strengthen our cooperation with these organisations.



## **FINANCE POLICY AND SPONSORING POLICY**

The AICS is a school with a healthy financial basis, as part of the Esprit Schools. The system of budgeting and control is of a high standard. As an internationally orientated Dutch School, we are subsidised by the Dutch government. In addition parents pay annual tuition fees. Tuition fees must be approved by the parent body of the Participation Council.

The school does not make use of sponsoring and has no plans to do so.



# 5 THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF THE AICS

Three organisations form the broader framework in which we operate and seek to improve: The International Baccalaureate, The Council of International Schools and The Esprit School Group.

## THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

The International Baccalaureate (IB), established more than 50 years ago, is a non-profit educational foundation, motivated by its mission, focused on the holistic development of students.

At the AICS we fully endorse and strive to live up to the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile.

### The IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organisation works with schools, governments and

international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### The IB Learner Profile

Central to all the IB programmes is the IB Learner Profile. The IB Learner Profile is the IB mission translated into ten characteristics that support students in being successful both during and beyond their school careers, "inquirers knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective."

The IB accreditation process supports schools through a process of self-evaluation, particularly focussed on the quality of the education. We actively participate in professionalization provided by the IB

## THE COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

The AICS is a member of the Council of International Schools (CIS). The CIS is an international organisation, which accredits schools based on their operational processes. Where the IB look towards the curriculum, CIS accreditation supports schools through a process of self-evaluation to improve their operational processes and meet a high set of standards regarding emotional and physical safety.

The AICS is currently in the process of re-accreditation. We actively endorse the commitment of the CIS to high quality education, global citizenship and student safety. The AICS supports *the CIS code of ethics*. We actively participate in professionalization provided by the CIS.

We have recently developed definitions of high quality learning and global citizenship.



### High quality learning

We found it challenging to create a precise and compact definition. The working definition which we have developed is:



**‘High Quality Learning encourages agency, dialogue, and building of concepts through transformative experiences.’**

We were easily able to give examples of high quality learning and how we relate high quality learning to expected learning outcomes.

School-wide discussion of this subject/document was interrupted by the onset of covid-19. In the coming months we will discuss this subject with students, parents and teachers and revise the document in the light of the outcomes. This definition is not static. As our understanding and implementation of this understanding grow within the school, the definition will evolve further.

### Global citizenship

Global citizenship is a shared understanding of the knowledge and development of the skills that form the foundation for meaningful engagement in the world. As Global citizens, we are self-aware and take moral and ethical responsibility to actively engage in our (wider) community. In doing so, we help to sustain the planet, work towards ethical systems and equity for the people in our communities. Intercultural learning plays a major role in this process.

At AICS we understand Intercultural Learning as an ongoing process in which we become increasingly aware of a variety of cultures, including our own. We develop this understanding through meaningful interactions and exploration of our identities and perspectives. We learn to appreciate the added value of our interdependence.

We understand Global citizenship to focus on three main areas: the planet (Earth), society (People) and social, political and economic factors (World) with sustainability at their core. We understand a key aspect of sustainability to focus on the future, extending beyond our lifetime and the importance of taking responsibility for this now. We think it is important to ensure that our students, but also our more immediate and wider community engage with, advocate and role-model responsible and ethical behaviour.



## ESPRIT SCHOOL GROUP

As a member of the Esprit group of schools we adhere to the *Esprit Education Manifesto* and strive to achieve the seven ambitions expressed in the Manifesto. Below we briefly describe how we intend to achieve these ambitions in the coming years.

### 1 *To provide the best place of learning for our students*

At both the South East and Satellite campuses, we have excellent physical accommodation for our students. At Main, we currently strive to optimise our office accommodation for educational purposes. In the coming years we will move to two excellent educational buildings, the main campus at A. J. Ernststraat and the South East campus at the Bijlmerplein (Sandcastle).

Sufficient and appropriate facilities for physical and health education are a point of concern for many schools in the Amsterdam region. Supported by the Board of Governors we will vigorously campaign for improvement of facilities for all our students, at our three campuses.

In the coming years we will strive to strengthen the role of our environment in the learning process. We will do so by making our mission, ambition, approaches to learning more visible within our buildings.

### 2 *Flexible learning paths*

When the AICS started student turnover was high. On average students now remain at the AICS for a longer period of time than in the past. Increasingly Amsterdam is an attractive place to live – international, but relatively small, diverse, open-minded and safe. Many people choose to stay in Amsterdam longer than they had originally planned.

Given this change, it is important that we offer flexible learning paths. To that end, we are introducing the Career-Related Programme as an alternative to the Diploma programme in school year 2020-2021.



### 3 *Continuous innovation*

At the AICS, we continually strive to improve our education. The major innovations for the coming years are the introduction of the Career-Related Programme and the transition, in primary school, from the International Primary Curriculum to the Primary Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate. By introducing these two programmes we will become one of approximately 40 schools in the world which offer the full IB continuum of programmes (PYP, MYP, CP and DP).

In becoming a continuum school, we strive to strengthen the vertical articulation between primary and secondary education and horizontal articulation between our three campuses.

### 4 *Educating world citizenship*

Global citizenship and intercultural education are keystones in education at the AICS. To emphasize the importance of this aspect of our education we have recently produced a policy document *Global Citizenship: Earth – World – People*.

*In the coming years we will focus on implementing this policy and further expanding the ideas.*



### 5 **Life-long learning**

We support our students to learn during and beyond school. A focus point for the coming years is to further improve our careers counselling in order to provide student support.

We support our staff to learn via a broad range of internal and external professional development. A focus point for the coming years is to strengthen the synergy between individual professional development and school development.

We are affiliated with the teacher training colleges in the region and work together with them to improve the quality of teacher training.

### 6 **Being sustainable**

In discussion with students, parents and staff about the purpose and direction of the school sustainability was the most mentioned subject requiring more attention.

In our education, we will focus more specifically on sustainability, so that our students come to understand its importance, take responsibility and help to build a sustainable future.

We will strengthen our involvement in the ECO-school movement.

We will be increasingly more careful in using our (energy) resources and buildings responsibly and by minimizing waste.

We will develop our human resource management to improve how our investment in staff professional development aligns with and contributes to the enrichment of our students' learning.

### 7 **At the heart of the community, and with the community's interest at heart**

Community is integral to the name of the AICS. In discussion with students, parents and staff about the purpose and direction of the school there was a call to make stronger connections with the local community.

*In the coming years we will focus on making more use of the local environment in our learning programmes. We will also actively seek collaboration with local schools, neighbourhood organisations, cultural organisations, etc.*



## 6 THE CURRICULUM

We aim to establish a comprehensively documented written curriculum articulated both horizontally and vertically, aligning concepts, approaches to learning skills as well as subject-specific knowledge. Notwithstanding, a written curriculum also has a dynamic aspect and needs to remain adaptable in order to maintain relevance for teachers and students to allow for integration of topics of current importance.

Our *written curriculum* is subject to periodic review, this process will be further adapted as we incorporate the new programmes

### THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

The most important innovation for the coming years is the transformation from the International Primary Curriculum to the *International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP)*.

This programme is aimed at students aged 4 – 11. The programme is designed to foster the development of the whole child. It strongly promotes constructivist, conceptual and inquiry based learning whereby learners are allowed to explore their own questions, construct new knowledge and transfer these ideas to a conceptual level of understanding.

Traditional academic subjects are part of the programme. We teach them in multi- or interdisciplinary lessons using transdisciplinary themes.

The decision to introduce the Primary Years Programme is motivated by the ambition to improve and align our education in the context of dynamic growth.



We intend to remain one school with multiple campuses. We believe that introducing the Primary Years Programme will provide a robust educational framework, which will support us in strengthening horizontal articulation of the primary school curriculum across the three campuses and vertical articulation between primary and secondary education. An important aspect of introducing the Primary Years Programme is adopting the language and structure of the programme so that throughout the school we have one language for our education and a recognisable structure.

At the moment we have no external feedback on, or validation of, the quality of our primary education. Introducing the Primary Years Programme will provide us with external feedback on the quality of our primary education from the International Baccalaureate.

In the school year 2020-2021, we will develop the programme. In the school year 2021-2022, we hope to receive formal accreditation from the International Baccalaureate to offer the programme.

All primary school staff across the three campuses will follow professional development together and collaborate together to develop and refine the curriculum. The primary Heads of School and the PYP coordinator will lead this innovation.

Another aim for the improvement in the primary years is to strengthen the attention to arts. To that end we have developed a long-term *Arts Development Programme* with the support of MOCCA, a centre of expertise for cultural education



## THE SECONDARY CURRICULUM

We already offer two of the three IB-programmes for secondary education: the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme.

### The Middle Years Programme

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) provides students with a framework of learning that encourages students to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers. The IB MYP is designed for students aged 11 – 16 (grades 6-10). The programme encourages students to make meaningful connections between their learning and the real world.

The MYP is academically rigorous. It challenges the students and develops their ability to think outside of the box. It prepares them for the Careers-Related Programme and/or the Diploma Programme and ultimately for further education. (For small numbers of students the Careers-Related Programme and/or the Diploma Programme may not be suitable).

Not only does the MYP foster the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding and global citizenship, it also provides them with opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitude and skills they need to manage complexity and take responsible action for the future.

*Our principal focus for the improvement of our delivery of the MYP programme in the coming years is:*

- ✘ Developing and facilitating collaborative planning among the teaching team to develop Interdisciplinary learning units;
- ✘ Development of one fully articulated interdisciplinary unit in each year level;
- ✘ Making the approaches to learning focus explicit for each year level;
- ✘ Vertically aligning the teaching and integration of the approaches to learning;
- ✘ As part of improving teaching and learning we will focus on further development of authentic formative and summative assessments.

### The MYP programme consists of eight subject groups:

- 1 Language and Literature (English and Dutch).
- 2 Language Acquisition (Dutch, English, French, German and Spanish).
- 3 Mathematics.
- 4 Arts (Drama, Music and Visual Arts).
- 5 Sciences (Integrated Sciences, Physics, Chemistry and Biology).
- 6 Physical and Health Education.
- 7 Individuals and Societies (Geography, & History).
- 8 Design (Product and Digital).

*IB MYP 1 students will have 957 hours of educational learning time;*

*IB MYP 2 students will have 1045 hours of educational learning time;*

*IB MYP 3 and 4 students will have 1104 hours of educational learning time;*

*IB MYP 5 students will have 1221 hours of educational learning time;*

On the following page you will find the lesson table for MYP 1 – 5.

**OVERVIEW OF LESSON HOURS PER SUBJECT 2020-21**

Subject Areas	MYP1	MYP2	MYP3	MYP4	MYP5
Language and Literature	8	8	8	8	8
Dutch	4	4	4	4	4
English	4	4	4	4	4
Language Acquisition	0	3	3	3	3
German (MYP 2 – 4)	0	3	0	0	0
Spanish (MYP 2 – 5)	0	3	3	3	3
French (MYP 2 – 5)	0	3	3	3	3
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	4
Art and Design	4	4	4	6	9
Music	4 (term 2)	4 (term3)	4 (term 1)	2	3
Drama	4 (term 1)	4 (term 2)	4 (term 3)		
Digital Design	0	0	0	2	3
Product Design	2	2	2	0	0
Visual Arts	4 (term 3)	4 (term 1)	4 (term 2)	2	3

MYP4 and 5 Visual Arts and Drama. They can choose between Digital Design and Music.

Sciences	3	3	6	6	6
Integrated Science	3	3	0	0	0
Physics	0	0	2	2	2
Chemistry	0	0	2	2	2
Biology	0	0	2	2	2
Physical and Health Education	4	4	2	2	2
Individuals and Societies	4	4	4	4	4
History and Religion	2	2	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2	2	2
Mentor Hour	2	1	1	1	2



## THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

### **The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP)**



The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) provides is designed for students aged 16-19. It is a unique international curriculum, not based on the pattern of one country, but a deliberate synthesis of the specialisation required in some national systems and the breadth of learning preferred in others. It is an academically challenging and balanced programme, addressing the intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being of students and is respected by universities across the globe.

Students who successfully complete the IB Diploma Programme demonstrate a strong commitment to learning, both in terms of their mastering of a range of subjects and in their development of the skills and disciplines necessary for success in our competitive, global world.

*Our principal focus for the improvement of the DP programme in the coming years is:*

- ✘ Approaches to teaching and learning – focus on higher order thinking skills and aligning this with practices in the CP, MYP and PYP;
- ✘ A common understanding of Inquiry-based learning;
- ✘ Integration of Core elements in the subjects;
- ✘ Completing the written curriculum.



### **IB diploma programme subject choice overview**

Students of the IB Diploma Programme need to choose six subjects: three at Higher Level (HL) and three at Standard Level (SL). HL subjects are chosen based on the student's academic strengths and interest in those subjects, requirements of institutions of tertiary learning and the advice of the career Counsellor and subject teachers. SL subjects cover topics in less depth than HL subjects and are intended to give the IBDP student a well-rounded education. HL subjects are usually timetabled for five teaching periods per week. SL subjects can be timetabled together with HL subjects, but require a minimum of three teaching periods per week. Students are required to choose one subject from each of the six subject groups. It is technically possible to take two Languages A instead of (or in addition to) a B Language and Literature and Language Acquisition (subject to timetabling constraints).

In addition to their six subjects, all IB Diploma Programme students will attend lessons in Theory of Knowledge. Furthermore, they must write an Extended Essay and fulfil the requirements of the Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) programme.



### SUBJECT GROUPS

#### Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

English Literature HL/SL  
English Language and Literature HL/SL  
Dutch Language and Literature HL/SL  
School-Supported Self-Taught Literature (SL only)

#### Group 2: Language Acquisition

English B HL/SL  
Dutch B HL/SL (B = language acquisition)  
French B HL/SL  
German B HL/SL  
German Ab Initio (SL only)  
Spanish B HL/SL  
Spanish Ab Initio (SL only)  
or an extra group 1 language

#### Group 3: Individuals and Societies

Geography HL/SL  
History HL/SL  
Economics HL/SL  
Business Management HL/SL

#### Group 4: Experimental Sciences

Biology HL/SL  
Physics HL/SL  
Chemistry HL/SL  
Environmental Systems & Societies (SL only)

#### Group 5: Mathematics and Computer Science

Applications and Interpretations HL/SL  
Analysis and Approaches HL/SL

#### Group 6: The Arts

Visual Arts HL/SL  
Music HL/SL  
or any choice from groups 1, 2, 3 and 4

In IB DP1 and DP2 students have a total of 2044 hours of educational learning time over two years.

### DP OVERVIEW OF LESSON HOURS PER SUBJECT 2020-21

Subject Areas	DP1	DP2
<b>Languages</b>		
Dutch lang and lit H	2*	2*
Dutch lang and lit S	3*	3*
Dutch Ab initio	-	3*
Dutch B H	2*	2*
Dutch B S	3*	3*
English B S	3*	3*
English B H	2*	2*
English literature H	2*	2*
English literature S	3*	3*
English lang and lit H	2*	2*
English lang and lit S	3*	3*
French B H	2*	2*
French B S	3*	3*
French Ab initio	-	2*
German Ab initio	4*	-
German B S	3*	3*
German B H	2*	2*
Spanish Ab initio	-	4*
Spanish B H	2*	2*
Spanish B S	3*	3*
SSST	1*	1*
<b>Individuals and societies</b>		
History H	2*	2*
History S	3*	3*
Geography H	2*	2*
Geography S	3*	3*
Economics H	2*	2*
Economics S	3*	3*
Business Manage. H	2*	2*
Business Manage. S	3*	3*

\* Optional subject



**DP OVERVIEW OF LESSON HOURS PER SUBJECT 2020-21**

Subject Areas	DP1	DP2
<b>Experimental sciences</b>		
Chemistry H	2*	2*
Chemistry S	4*	4*
Biology H	2*	2*
Biology S	4*	4*
Mathematics AAH	1*	1*
Mathematics AAS	4*	4*
Mathematics AIH	1*	1*
Mathematics AIS	4*	4*
<b>Arts</b>		
Music H	1*	1*
Music S	4*	4*
VIA H	2*	2*
VIA S	4*	4*
<b>Other</b>		
TOK	3	2
Mentor	2	1
CORE	1	1

\* Optional subject

### The Career-related Programme

The most important innovation in secondary education at the AICS for the coming years is the introduction of the Careers-Related Programme.

The *International Baccalaureate Career-Related Programme (CP)* is a rigorous and unique academic programme that offers students between the age of sixteen and nineteen a different learning environment than that of the older and more established IB Diploma Programme (DP). The CP provides a balance of academic and career-related education, which allows students the opportunity to gain a valuable qualification that will enable them to attend universities both here in the Netherlands and the UK, as well as in other countries according to equivalence.

The IBCP develops students to be academically strong, skilled in a practical field, critical and ethical thinkers, self-directed, collaborative, resilient and determined, confident and assured, caring and reflective, and inquisitive.

By offering the CP at the AICS we will be able to promote access to an IB education, to satisfy a worldwide trend of demand for qualifications that combine academic with career-related achievement, to broaden student options, to challenge and support our students every step of the way, and to ensure that our students are uniquely prepared to serve, lead and succeed.

We will be the second school in the Netherlands, and the first school in the Amsterdam region, to offer this programme.



## Subjects

Students follow the BTEC Business Programme, IB DP Maths and English at appropriate SL levels and choose either Environmental Systems or Geography.

In addition, students develop an extra language, write a reflective project and complete service activities. A highlight of the programme is the work experience and the development of personal and professional skills.

## The BTEC business programme

*In this programme, students complete 5 mandatory units:*

- ▶ Exploring Business
- ▶ Research and Plan a Marketing Campaign
- ▶ Business Finance
- ▶ Principles of Management
- ▶ Business Decision Making

*In addition, students may complete 4 optional units.*

- ▶ Managing an Event
- ▶ Team Building in Business
- ▶ Pitching for a New Business
- ▶ Work Experience in Business

IB CP1 and CP2 students have a total of 2044 hours of educational learning time over two years. On the following page you will find the lesson table for CP1 and CP2.

## CP OVERVIEW OF LESSON HOURS PER SUBJECT

Subject Areas	CP1	CP2
<b>Languages</b>		
English B S	3*	3*
English B H	2*	2*
English literature H	2*	2*
English literature S	3*	3*
English lang and lit H	2*	2*
English lang and lit S	3*	3*
<b>Individuals and societies</b>		
Geography S	3*	3*
<b>Experimental sciences</b>		
Env. Syst & Soc S	4*	4*
<b>Mathematics and computer science</b>		
Mathematics AAS	4*	4*
Mathematics AIS	4*	4*
<b>Other</b>		
Mentor	2	2
CORE	1	1
PPS	2	2
LD	1	1
BTEC	16	16

\* Elective subject



## LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language development plays a major role in learning, helping a child develop identity. Language determines, in part, the complexity in cognitive development. We recognise the importance of best language development alongside the development of English as instrumental in a child’s development, with regards to both social emotional and academic development. We recognise multilingualism as an asset. As a Dutch international school, we provide all our students with Dutch language learning opportunities. For more details, please see our [Language Policy](#).

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Providing opportunities to support “Best language’ development;
- ✘ Helping teachers to develop as language teachers irrespective of which subject they teach;
- ✘ Improving the current School-Supported-Self-taught programme;
- ✘ Celebrating Language diversity within the school;
- ✘ Improving transitions from AICS to mainstream Dutch education with a focus on Dutch Language Development.

## THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

The school has a well-equipped library with one of the largest collections of children’s books in the Netherlands. We have recently introduced e-books. We have recently appointed a new teacher-librarian and formulated a plan for development of the library.

The library plays an active role in the development of language literacy for primary students. There is room for improvement in the involvement of the library in the educational process, particularly in secondary.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Strengthening the role of the library in the educational process. In doing so we follow the IB-guidelines for libraries;
- ✘ Developing a programme to introduce (new) students and (new) staff to the library;
- ✘ Library-supported research – In consultation with coordinators, and ICT support staff, the library will develop a research portal and provide instructions for use for students and teachers;
- ✘ Library-based media literacy – In collaboration with subject area coordinators (primary and secondary) library staff will develop a programme for media literacy. The focus will be on secondary students;
- ✘ Library-supported best language programme – the library will acquire more books, catalogue and present them better. The library will play an active role in the implementation of our language policy, including the annual Language Day.



# 7 TEACHING AND ASSESSING FOR LEARNING



## High Quality Learning

We have a clear idea of what High Quality Learning is and our practices establish consistency in teaching and learning across the whole school. Our definition of High Quality Learning is: 'High Quality Learning encourages agency, dialogue, and building of concepts through transformative experiences.'

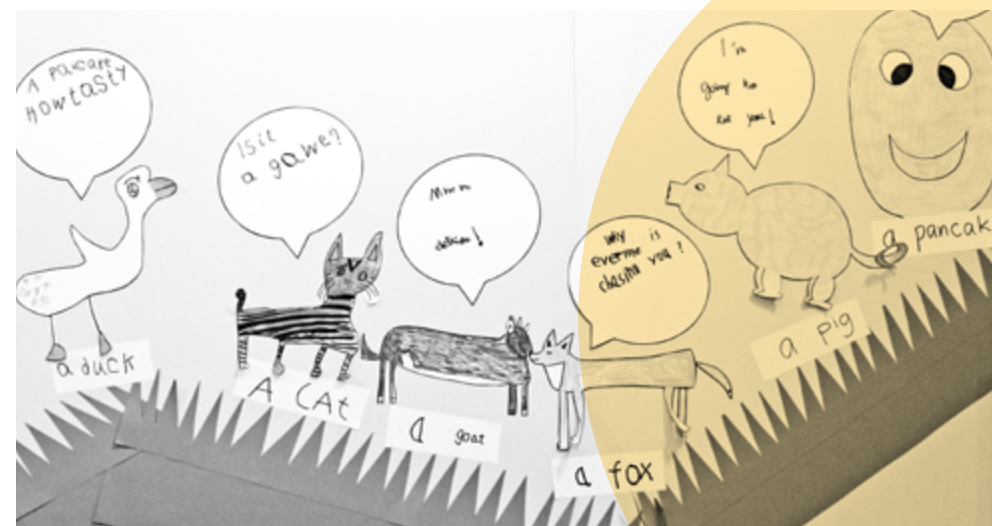
We aim to ensure that all students are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of student achievement.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Developing as a community of learning, where learners strive for continuous development and growth
- ✘ Encouraging and equipping students to become independent, resourceful and resilient lifelong learners;
- ✘ Supporting staff to model lifelong learning, through continually developing their own skills and knowledge and contributing to
- ✘ Encouraging parents to model life-long learning and supporting them to participate in their child's learning and development.
- ✘ Improving student learning by ensuring that all students are supported and challenged to reach their potential.

## TEACHING

We continually strive to maintain and improve the quality of teaching. We have an induction programme for new teachers to help them land and integrate at the AICS. External and internal professional development is focussed on improving the quality of teaching and learning. We hold regular Inset Days throughout the school year. In both primary and secondary examples of good practice are regularly presented to teaching colleagues at weekly meetings and on Inset days.





### Digital Observation Tool

We have recently introduced the Digital Observation Tool (DOT) with the same, tailor-made rubrics for primary and for secondary. We are now experimenting with the use of the Digital Observation Tool. Next school year we will adjust the rubrics so that they are more focussed on the IB standards for high quality learning and teaching.

The intention is to create one framework and lens for observing and giving feedback on teaching and learning and for discussion of teaching and learning, which can be used in a variety of situations. The DOT will be used by Heads of School in the context of the appraisal cycle. It will also be used by the coaches for new teachers and interns, and by teachers, who in duos will observe each other's lessons, and give each other feedback.

Besides giving feedback to individual teachers, DOT will be used to build up a picture of the quality of teaching and learning in the school as a whole. It will provide information for professional development and for actions leading to improvement in teaching and learning.

### Feedback from students

At present feedback from students is only gathered in the context of the appraisal cycle and the questionnaire is filled in on paper. As part of our drive to involve students and promote student voice, we will develop a digital questionnaire which students will use for all secondary teachers. Students will be asked to fill in the questionnaire for a small number of teachers, ensuring feedback is provided for all teachers. The outcome will be sent to the individual teacher and his/her line-manager who will discuss the outcome in terms of development goals.





## ASSESSING FOR LEARNING

The IB-curriculum has a wide variety of means of assessment. The focus of assessment within the curriculum is self-reflection and development in learning, not on grades. We endorse this approach to assessment. In professional development for teachers we focus on how teachers can give constructive, formative feedback to support individual students in their learning process.

Primary

In primary school parents receive a report card with personalised feedback on the progress of their child three times per year and they can discuss the progress of their child with the class teacher throughout the year.

In order to benchmark the learning progress of our students we use Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) Progress Tests In English (PTE) and Progress Tests in Maths (PTM) to track the development of our students in English language and mathematics. The results of these tests are shared with parents and additional support is offered to all students who would benefit from it.

*For the coming years our focus for improvement will be on:*

- ✘ Tracking the progress of individual students and groups through their years at school.
- ✘ Improving the communication with parents regarding our assessment and testing





## Secondary

### Formative Assessment

On-going and regular assessment takes place during the teaching and learning process using a variety of methods to inform teachers and learners about the progress of learning. Formative assessment can for instance be draft assignments, oral presentations, questioning, discussion, visual representations and quizzes.

*In the coming years our focus on improving formative assessment so that:*

- ✘ Formative assessment and learning are directly linked and provide feedback to teachers and learners. It is responsive to learner needs and informs teaching practice;
- ✘ Formative assessment engages students actively in the process of learning. Students learn to self-assess, peer-assess, and improve their performance with the aid of each teacher's feedback;
- ✘ Formative assessment provides students with opportunities to learn new skills and to achieve better results while taking risks and not being afraid to make mistakes as they are not working solely towards the achievement of grades;

### Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of a teaching and learning process or experience and is planned for in advance. The tasks involved are assessed using relevant subject criteria. These grades count towards end of term grades. Summative assessments can take a variety of forms including for example tests, preliminary examinations, lab reports, oral and visual presentations, essays, written assignments, projects, oral examinations.

*In the coming years our focus on improving summative assessment so that:*

- ✘ The assessments enable learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in authentic tasks and apply their skills.

### Reporting

Reporting takes place at the end of each term and it gives an overview of student performance.

*For MYP, CP and DP students*

- ✘ The report grades strive to reflect assessment of the whole course, MYP, CP or DP;
- ✘ The report includes the students' self-reflection on the term;
- ✘ The report indicates progress with regards to the Approaches to Learning Skills.



### *For MYP students*

- ✘ All criteria and all strands will have been assessed twice by the end of the school year;
- ✘ At the end of the second term, all criteria strands will have been assessed once and therefore the final criterion grades are indicative of achievement;
- ✘ Report grades awarded in the MYP are determined using the best-fit method.

### *For CP and DP students*

- ✘ The report grade reflects the students' ability at that point in time, applying the latest available May exam session grade boundaries published by the IB or BTEC;
- ✘ Assessment results aim to reflect the student's ability of the whole course. For some subjects this will mean that assessments are cumulative.
- ✘ For CP, in addition to the IB subject requirements, the BTEC component assessments will be clearly outlined in the CP Programme of Assessment and Examinations.





# 8 STUDENTS' LEARNING AND WELL-BEING

## OPEN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We actively strive to engage students in their learning process, to promote student leadership and voice regarding their learning and well-being. Secondary students are active members of the Participation Council and in the Secondary department there is an active Secondary Student Council. However, from feedback via the CIS community survey we realise that this is an area in which the school can and must improve.



*In the coming years we will focus on:*

✘ **Involving students in the improvement of teaching and learning**

Starting next school year, we introduce a digital questionnaire which will enable all secondary students to give feedback on their perspective on the teaching they receive. All students will be asked to fill in the questionnaire for a small number of teachers, ensuring feedback is provided for all teachers. The outcome will be sent to the individual teacher and his/her line-manager who will discuss the outcome in terms of development goals. The global outcomes will be reported to the Participation Council and the Student Council. The outcomes will inform plans for improvement.

✘ **Stimulating student voice**

Starting next school year all secondary students will be informed by mentors of their rights as students, which procedures they can follow if they experience problems, are dissatisfied, or have a problem which they wish to discuss in confidentiality. The secondary Heads of School will prepare mentors for this task.

A member of the school leadership will regularly meet with the Student Council in order to stimulate active participation of students in school improvement.



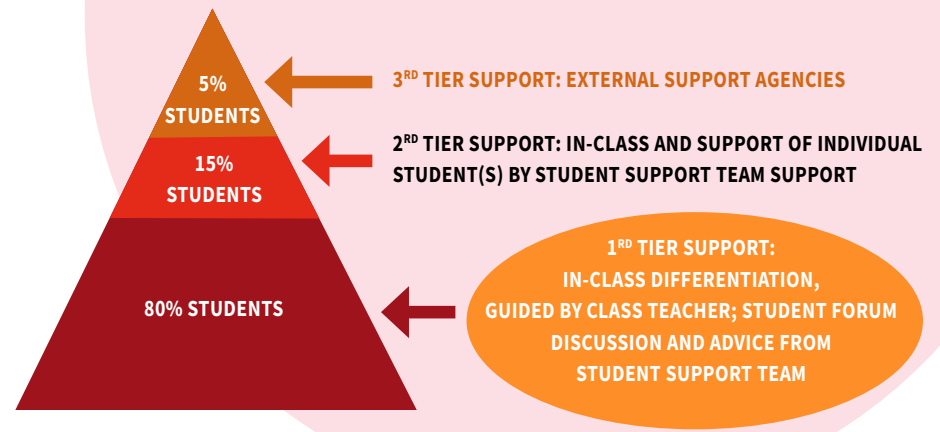
## STUDENT SUPPORT

The AICS aims to be an inclusive school. We believe deeply in our mission to serve our diverse and globally mobile community to the best of our ability, and accept children with a diverse range of learning backgrounds.

Our mission that everyone is included, challenged and successful is one we take very seriously, believing that an inclusive educational programme has a value that enriches the whole community. We accept students with a range of abilities and learning diversity needs. While we strive to be inclusive, we may not be able to meet the needs of some students. In the interest of giving the best education and support, we carefully assess all students with learning diversity needs who apply to the AICS. We provide a range of support options for students depending on their needs. The form and duration of support offered in primary is different to the support offered in secondary. In primary school, student support takes place in class and in small group settings. In secondary school, support is offered in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. We also collaborate with a wide range of external partners to support our students. When we are unable to support a student's learning diversity needs we advise families on alternative schooling possibilities.

### The student support team

Student Support begins within the classroom itself, led by teachers and mentors. Our aim is to ensure that we are able to meet the diverse needs of our student population by tailoring our teaching around individual student needs.



### Student Support Pyramid: The first tier

Within the first tier of support the Primary School Teacher, Primary Class Assistants, and the Secondary School mentors and teachers are always the first point of reference. All teachers are responsible for the well-being of the specific students under their care. Within this tier, teachers provide in-class differentiation and accommodation in order to best meet the needs of their students. Discussion within the Student Forum and advice from our Student Support Team are also used in this tier. Support within this tier should accommodate the needs of approximately 80% of our student population.

### Student forum

Throughout the school year our teachers engage in a discussion called Student Forum. At this forum teachers share observations, questions and strategies on the academic, social and emotional development of their class as a community. In addition to discussing the well-being of a class as a whole, observations, questions and strategies are shared in relation to the academic, social and emotional development of individual students.



In Secondary School, the Career Counsellors are responsible for guiding and advising students about their subject choices, possible career pathways and university and college applications.

Peer Coaches are Secondary School students who are trained and supervised to help and assist their fellow students with all kinds of challenges, ranging from settling into a new class/school, mediating in disputes and peaceful conflict resolution.

### **Student Support Pyramid: The second tier**

Within the second tier of support, students who have been identified through the Student Forum as requiring extra support are referred to the Student Support Team. It is through this process that students with more specialised needs are supported. The support they receive is in a combination of co-taught and small group support. We believe it is important that students, parents and teachers work closely together to design the form that the support will take. Support within this tier should accommodate the needs of approximately 15% of our student population.

### **Student Support Pyramid: The third tier**

Our third tier of support is a programme through which students with more specialised needs receive support from care organizations external to the school. These students have been referred to the Student Support Team. A Learning Diversity Specialist from within the school is responsible for monitoring, communicating and coordinating their care. Support within this tier should accommodate the needs of approximately 5% of our student population.

*The AICS Student Support Team consists of:*

- ✘ Primary and Secondary Head of School.
- ✘ Primary and Secondary Student Support Coordinator.
- ✘ Learning Diversity Specialists (LDS).
- ✘ Career Counsellor.
- ✘ Learning Support Assistants (LSA).
- ✘ AICS Administration Team Member.

Our Student Support Team is a whole school team which means that all team members work with students of all ages in the school. We are actively involved in the external network of support within the Amsterdam region – school doctors, parent-child advisors, etc.

Please see our [Student Support Policy and Inclusion Policy](#) for further information.



*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Creating clarity for students, parents and teachers as regards how the student support system works, which support we can and cannot offer by aligning the student support policy with the admissions policy;
- ✘ Monitoring of the student support system – analysis of the quantity and characteristics of students who need extra support;
- ✘ Evaluating the effectivity of the extra support which is given;
- ✘ Shifting the focus from support for individual students to support for classroom teachers;
- ✘ Making the SST team more visible in the school. The SST team will give regular presentations and publish in newsletters for students, parents and staff;
- ✘ Strengthening our support for high potential learners.
- ✘ Professionalising mentoring in the secondary department. Mentors will follow training. A learning line through the years and materials will be developed.

## **SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

The physical and social environment in which we learn and work is important to us.

### **Physical environment**

We adhere to all the safety regulations prescribed by the Dutch government, the local authorities and the Esprit school group. We have a safety plan and a secure system for ensuring physical safety.

The Satellite and the South East Campus provide excellent environments for learning and working. The Main Campus is an office building. This is not an ideal educational environment. It does conform to all regulations as regards physical safety.





*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Creating excellent and sustainable environments for learning and working in our new campuses – A.J. Ernststraat and Bijlmerplein (Sandcastle);
- ✘ Improving our school evacuation procedures, by regularly informing all parties and regularly exercising the procedures;
- ✘ Improving the 'healthiness' of the food which is served to both students and staff. To this end we will apply for official status of Healthy School Canteen.

### **Social Environment**

We strive to create an open and supportive environment for students, parents and teachers.

Members of the school leadership and staff have followed training in Child Protection and all staff has received training in Child Protection.

*We have a number of facilities and policies in place to underpin this:*

- ✘ A code of conduct for students, parents and staff;
- ✘ An anti-bullying policy;
- ✘ A policy and procedure for child protection;
- ✘ An internal confidentiality advisor for students and parents;
- ✘ An external confidentiality advisor for staff;
- ✘ An integrity code;
- ✘ Regulations for reporting wrongdoings;
- ✘ A complaints procedure.

We do not as yet have a Digital Citizenship (social media) policy.

To monitor social safety by means of an annual questionnaire in which students are asked questions about their perception of safety and wellbeing. The outcomes are used to further develop a safe social environment. Two Heads of School, one for Primary and one for Secondary, function as anti-bullying coordinators. In addition, we have an internal confidentiality for students and parents.



*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Developing a Digital Citizenship policy and implementing it school wide;
- ✘ Teaching Digital Citizenship as part of approaches to learning. So, integrating Digital Citizenship in the curriculum;
- ✘ Informing students, parents and staff on our anti-bullying policy;
- ✘ Making the roles of the confidentiality advisors clear to students, parents and staff. Annual training for all staff in Child Protection.



## 9 SCHOOL STAFFING



### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Esprit School Group, not the AICS, is the official employer for all of our staff. The AICS occupies a unique position within the Esprit School Group because of:

- ✘ The rapidly increasing volume of our staff in the context of our dynamic growth;
- ✘ The fact that most of our staff are recruited from abroad.

The senior management of the AICS actively participate in the formulation of Esprit staffing policies to ensure that the unique position of the AICS is adequately taken into account.

Nationally, primary staff falls under the Collective Labour Agreement for primary educational staff. Secondary staff, support staff and school leadership fall under the Collective Labour Agreement for secondary educational staff.

Our policies are outlined in a number of documents, such as the Teacher Handbook, which we have recently updated. Staff policies are approved by the Esprit General Participation Council and/or the Staff Council of the AICS.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Making our staff policies clearer to staff. We will do so by making the documents more 'reader friendly' and by presentations in which we explain the policies and address any questions staff have.

### RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION OF STAFF

We are in the fortuitous position of being able to attract a large number of highly qualified and experienced staff to our school. We have secure procedures in place to select and appoint new staff. Recruitment of staff is the responsibility of the school leadership team in collaboration with our Human Resources Advisor.

A good start for new staff is important to us. We follow the Esprit guidelines as regards induction of new staff in an effort to help new staff land and integrate in our community. The Human Resources Advisor, the coaches for new teachers, the subject area coordinators and the school leadership all play a role in welcoming and coaching our new staff.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Improving the efficiency of our recruitment policy, using IT applications to replace paper forms;
- ✘ Using feedback from new members of staff to improve our induction programme.



## STAFF PROFILE

Our staff currently numbers 250. In the coming years we will grow to approximately 300.

*The global characteristics of our staff are:*

- ✘ Commitment to the mission and vision of the AICS and the IB;
- ✘ Possessing the required educational qualifications;
- ✘ Native or near-native English;
- ✘ Experience with IB-education;
- ✘ Culturally competent and able to function well in a cultural diverse environment.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Continuing to attract highly qualified and committed staff;
- ✘ Monitoring the growth and development of our staff.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Esprit School Group attaches great importance to professional development. It offers a broad range of training for staff from all its schools. The AICS also attaches great importance to professional development of staff. Our professional development activities include the following:

- ✘ Inset days for all staff, including support staff. On these Inset days we address a range of issues which are relevant to the development of the school;
- ✘ Emergency response training for groups of staff in all three buildings. This to ensure that we maintain the quality and quantity of our emergency response teams;
- ✘ Language training for members of staff who wish to improve their English and/or learn Dutch;
- ✘ We offer Mindfulness courses and yoga classes for all our staff;
- ✘ Wide participation in IB training to ensure that our staffs are qualified and competent to teach the programmes we offer;
- ✘ InterVision for all secondary staff and the school leadership to improve the quality of collaboration between colleagues;
- ✘ A wide range of small-group and individual professionalization development activities to support life-long learning;
- ✘ A growing number of teachers follow university programmes with the help of subsidies offered by the Dutch Government for the educational sector.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Strengthening our capacity as a learning organisation, so creating greater synergy between the learning of individual staff members and the development of the school as a whole;
- ✘ Producing a Professional Development Policy to make clear to all staff and interns the aims, the possibilities, and the organisation of professional development.
- ✘ Training for all primary staff in the Primary Years Programme to support the introduction of this programme.



# 10 QUALITY ASSURANCE

## INTERNAL

The director meets regularly with the Executive Board of the Esprit School Group to discuss the progress of the school. The Executive Board visits the school on an annual basis. The Supervisory Board also visits the school annually.

The Esprit School Group has an internal benchmarking system, which audits, student results, finances, etc. This internal benchmarking system informs discussions between the director and the Executive Board on the progress of the school.

Based on the school plan for four years we produce a school development plan for each school year. To write the development plan for the coming school year we evaluate the progress in the current school year.

Besides the school development plan for each school year, we have a whole school calendar in which we plan all our activities for the coming school year – Inset Days, examinations, test weeks, parent teacher conferences etc. There is room for improvement in the planning of our activities and the communication about our activities. We have a quality assurance work group which meets bi-weekly and steers both internal quality assurance and external accreditations.



*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Improving the quality of our school development plan for each school year, making it more accessible and understandable for all staff. And, thus more of a driving force in school improvement;
- ✘ Improving the long-term planning of activities and the communication about these activities. This in order to improve the image of the school with students, parents and staff.



## FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS

In compliance with national agreements the Esprit School Group organises feedback from stakeholders in the following ways. Employee survey – once every three years members of staff at all Esprit Schools complete a questionnaire. The outcomes are used to inform future decisions and developments. The latest survey was conducted in the spring of 2020.

Student and parent satisfaction survey – once a year a questionnaire is sent out to a representative sample of students and parents in secondary school. A nationally agreed focus is 'social wellness'. The outcomes are published on the websites of all schools. In addition to these nationally agreed means of feedback from staff, students and parents we have recently carried out 360° feedback for members of the leadership team.

At present feedback from students is only gathered in the context of the appraisal cycle and the questionnaire is filled in on paper. As part of our drive to involve students and take them seriously next school year we will develop a digital questionnaire which will be used for all secondary teachers. Students will be asked to fill in the questionnaire for a small number of teachers. The outcome will be sent to the individual teacher and his/her line-manager who will discuss the outcome in terms of development goals.

## INTERNAL ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

We analyse MYP e-assessments and the Diploma programme exams results in the Autumn term to look at patterns/ trends across the whole grade and to compare against the international averages. We shared the analysis with our parents in October. Teachers also carry out their own analysis against the prediction they make before the summer exams take place. Internally, the results are used to inform planning by classroom teachers. We are developing a system whereby we can correlate end of term report grades, test and preliminary exams results with the CAT4 predictions.

*In the coming years we will focus on:*

- ✘ Developing students' confidence in examinations;
- ✘ Developing leadership to accurately forecast examination results based on performance data;
- ✘ Developing the skills of teachers in order to analyse internal and external examination results.





## EXTERNAL BENCHMARKING

### Primary

In primary we use Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT), Progress Tests in English (PTE) and Progress Tests in Maths (PTM). These are internationally recognised tests which provide us with a robust benchmark.

### Secondary

#### Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4)

In order to benchmark the learning progress of our secondary students we use CAT4 tests to track the development of our students in all the subjects which they study. Students in MYP1, MYP4 and DP1 take the tests at the start of the academic year. The results of these tests are shared with teachers so that they understand what a student's academic potential might be.

*The tests allow teachers and the secondary school leadership team to:*

- ✘ Identify individual students' strengths and areas for improvement;
- ✘ Track students' progress;
- ✘ Inform teaching and learning, and focus instructional practices;
- ✘ Determine professional development requirements and resourcing requirements;
- ✘ Inform curriculum development and ensure it is addressing students' learning needs;
- ✘ Provide holistic information on academic and social development.

### MYP External Assessment

Students in their final year of the MYP take part in an international IB MYP assessment. The assessment consists of a combination of portfolio style assessments and online assessments. In addition, teachers upload samples of students' work in all subject areas, for external feedback from IB assessors. The results of the assessment and the feedback from IB assessors is used to inform teaching and learning the following academic year. The IB publishes reports of the results of all schools which allow us to benchmark the results of our students.

### DP External Assessment

Students in their final year of DP take part in an international baccalaureate examination and assessment along with all other DP students around the world. The final assessment process consists of both examinations and coursework. The internal and external internal assessment of students' work in all subjects. This work is uploaded onto the IB system for external evaluation. In May of each academic year, the DP students sit a written examination for all subjects except Visual Arts which is assessed based on other components. These examinations are also evaluated externally.

*In the coming years we will focus on transparent communication about our results for students, parents and staff. We will publish information about our students' results on our website.*



## **EXTERNAL ACCREDITATION**

### **CIS/IB**

Both the Council of International Schools and the International Baccalaureate have a rigorous quality control system which includes visiting the school once every five years. We are currently in the process of preparing for an external accreditation carried out by the CIS in combination with IB. In the coming year we will deliver a self-evaluation report. Ten representatives of the CIS and IB will visit the school for a week in October 2021. In the spring of 2022 we will receive the accreditation report which will inform the future development of the school.

### **Dutch Inspection of Education**

As a partly state subsidised Dutch International School the AICS is evaluated by the Dutch Inspection of Education and held against the same standards as Dutch national schools.



# APPENDIX 1

# GENERAL

# INFORMATION



## THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL (AICS)

Principal Rynette de Viliers

### AICS Main (primary and secondary)

Prinses Irenestraat 59,  
1077 WV Amsterdam

T 020 577 1240

M [info@aics.espritscholen.nl](mailto:info@aics.espritscholen.nl)

W <https://aics.espritscholen.nl>

Brin numbers

Primary 24TC-02

Secondary 17YS-17



### AICS Satellite (primary)

A.J. Ernststraat 130

1082 LP Amsterdam

T 020 723 4830

M [infosatellite@aics.espritscholen.nl](mailto:infosatellite@aics.espritscholen.nl)

W <https://aics.espritscholen.nl>



### AICS South East (primary and secondary)

Darlingstraat 2

1102 MX Amsterdam

T 020 723 5280

M [infosoutheast@aics.espritscholen.nl](mailto:infosoutheast@aics.espritscholen.nl)

W <https://aics.espritscholen.nl>



# APPENDIX 2

# SCHOOL POLICIES

**Below a list of the school policies you can find on the website of our school.**

<https://aics.espritscholen.nl/home/about-aics/school-policies/>

We annually review our school policies and add policies in the light of the development of the school.

## Whole School Policies

- ✘ *Academic Honesty Policy*
- ✘ *Admissions Policy*
- ✘ *Arts Development Programme*
- ✘ *Assessment Policy*
- ✘ *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- ✘ *Class Division Policy*
- ✘ *Complaints Procedure*
- ✘ *Global Citizenship Policy*
- ✘ *Integrity Code*
- ✘ *Language Policy*
- ✘ *Medical Protocol*
- ✘ *Regulations on Reporting Wrongdoings*
- ✘ *Student Charter*
- ✘ *Student Support Profile*
- ✘ *Curriculum Review Cycle*



Click click



Click click

## Primary School Policies

- ✘ *Participation Council Primary School*

## Secondary School Policies

- ✘ *English Language Acquisition Development Protocol.pdf*
- ✘ *Participation Council Secondary School*



# APPENDIX 3

# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AICS</b>	The Amsterdam International Community School
<b>IB</b>	The International Baccalaureate
<b>CAT</b>	Cognitive Ability Tests
<b>CIS</b>	The Council of International Schools
<b>CP</b>	The Careers-Related Programme
<b>DOT</b>	Digital Observation Tool
<b>DP</b>	The Diploma Programme
<b>ECO</b>	Ecological
<b>INSET</b>	In-Service Training
<b>MYP</b>	The Middle Years Programme
<b>PTE</b>	Progress Tests in English
<b>PTM</b>	Progress Tests In Maths
<b>PYP</b>	The Primary Years Programme
<b>SST</b>	Student Support Team



Amsterdam, maart 2021

@ AICS

No part of this book may be used or be reproduced or used  
in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the publisher.

Colofon Text: AICS

Graphic Design: Sandra Broersen

Photography: Gerry Hurkmans