

AI SR



The American International School of Rotterdam

Early Childhood Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page/s
Contents	1
Letter of Welcome	3
AISR School Philosophy	4
AISR Early Childhood Philosophy	4
AISR Curriculum in Early Childhood	4 - 6
English as an Additional Language	7
Homework	7
How Parents can help	7 - 8
Handwriting Policy	9
Physical Education Classes, Swimming	9
Reporting Student Progress	9
Field Trips and Excursions	10
School Sponsored Events	10
Celebrations Policy	11
Room Parents	11
Birthday Party Policy	11
Medical Office	12
Fire and Evacuation	12
Snack and Lunch	12 - 13
Buses	13 - 14
Clothing	14 - 15
Lost and Found	15
Facilities	15
Library	15
Behavior Policy and AISR Golden Rules	16
Computer Use	16
Electronic Games/Portable Music Players /Mobile Phones	16
Playground Rules	16
Harassment	17
Theft/Stealing	17
Schedule	17
Official Hours	17
Attendance/Tardies	18
Dropping Off and Picking Up Students	18
Leaving School Grounds	19
Emergency Closing	19
Admission and Placement/ Admission Requirements	20
Special Needs	20
Ages of Attendance	20
Retention	21
Verification Document	22

Dear Parents and Students,

I would like to extend my welcome to you all. It is my hope that your child will enjoy their stay with us during the 2011-2012 school year.

When children enter school for the first time, teachers have infinite possibilities to begin inspiring, challenging and educating them. Extensive research affirms the many benefits resulting from Early Childhood education.

As Principal of the Elementary School, I look forward to a positive and successful year. We have a very dedicated and hard working staff, who aim to provide a high quality, integrated education for 3, 4 & 5 year olds, that will contribute to their early development and learning. I am inspired by their zeal for their jobs, their work and their rapport with parents and students. They are very enthusiastic about their role as teachers of your children.

Information regarding various school policies, student life, services and conduct will be addressed in this book. If you have any questions regarding this information, please bring it to the attention of a teacher, or myself. We are here to help you in any way we can.

Parents make an act of faith when they place the education of their children in our hands. AISR is deeply aware of this responsibility and appreciates the confidence that parents have in our professionalism. The professional staff of the school has adopted a Code of Ethics, the preamble of which states:

“The educator believes in the worth and dignity of people. He/she recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. He/she regards as essential to these goals, the protection of all. The educator accepts his/her responsibility to practice his/her profession according to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility he/she has accepted in choosing a career in education, and engages him/herself, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his/her colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of this code.”

I wish you all a challenging, positive and fun-filled school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne-Marie Blitz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Anne-Marie Blitz
Elementary Principal

AISR SCHOOL 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 continuously 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.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY

The Early Childhood program at AISR aims to educate the "whole child" by focusing on intellectual, social, emotional, physical and creative growth. This approach lends value to the rich diversity of culture that children bring to the classroom. We strive to provide a stimulating environment in which learning is spontaneous, children learn from each other and teachers act as facilitators in the learning process.

The American International of Rotterdam is committed to providing a caring, secure, positive and respectful environment in which students can learn and develop as individuals and where adults can help them to do so. AISR's Community of Respect (COR) actively supports all behaviors that enhance learning and support the development of healthy interpersonal relationships.

CURRICULUM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

At AISR, our Early Childhood Department Program is based on the *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, a "comprehensive, scientifically based early childhood curriculum designed to improve classroom quality and cognitive and social-emotional outcomes in young children." The Creative Curriculum meets all of the standards put forth for effective early childhood curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood 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 Childhood 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 'Golden Rules' and asking them to assess their own behavior.

As an Early Childhood 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 Childhood 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 computers. Outdoor play is also an important part of the daily routine.

Language Development

As children move through the Early Childhood 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.

What to expect in Kindergarten

Children learn about reading through:

- Listening to stories - This helps children become familiar with written sentence structure, predicting events and different types of vocabulary.
- Shared Reading - Children observe the teacher and take part in reading an enlarged text.
- Guided Reading - Children work in small groups using texts that are matched to the children's individual ability and are then also practiced at home.

Children learn about writing through:

- Learning about the relationship between written symbols and spoken sounds e.g. the beginning sounds, consonant blends, endings and vowel blends.
- Writing clusters or letters to represent words or convey a message.
- Learning common words by heart and becoming familiar with spelling patterns e.g. rhyming words.

Mathematical Development

In Mathematics, there are three curricular focal points that provide the content and instructional emphases for each grade level. These focal points are addressed in contexts that promote problem solving, reasoning, communication, making connections, and designing and analyzing representations. These focal points are listed below.

Pre-Kindergarten 1 and 2

- *Number and Operations*: Developing an understanding of whole numbers, including concepts of correspondence, counting, cardinality, and comparison.
- *Geometry*: Identifying shapes and describing spatial relationships.
- *Measurement*: Identifying measurable attributes and comparing objects by using these Attributes.

Kindergarten

- *Number and Operations*: Representing, comparing, and ordering whole numbers and joining and separating sets.
- *Geometry*: Describing shapes and space.
- *Measurement*: Ordering objects by measurable attributes.

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC)

To integrate learning from all disciplines, AISR uses the IPC, a “world class, brain-friendly, comprehensive and practical curriculum, delivering subject, personal and international knowledge, skills and understanding.”

The IPC provides the support teachers and students need to help primary and elementary children learn as 21st century international citizens. The IPC focuses on academic and personal development, and the development of a global awareness. Learning is active, engaging, and above all meaningful to children.

For Early Childhood children, this means that learning which is relevant to the future must be placed in a context that is meaningful to their present lives.

Learning is described in 4 strands:

- **Independence and Interdependence** - This strand focuses to a large extent on the children’s personal goals and their relationships with other children.
- **Communicating** - This strand is primarily about developing skills in communication including speaking and listening, reading and writing, early numeracy work and the expressive arts.
- **Exploring** - Through this strand the children’s skills in inquiry are developed.
- **Healthy Living** - Within this strand, children are encouraged to understand how to look after themselves and each other.

In Pre-Kindergarten 1, Pre-Kindergarten 2 and the beginning of Kindergarten, these ‘Early Years’ units are mostly exploratory – using different areas in the classroom to inspire children’s curiosity and learn about the world around them. In the latter part of Kindergarten, children begin to develop the knowledge, skills and understandings that will be further developed throughout the Elementary School. A list of the different units (or topics) your child will cover during the year is presented at the Open House at the beginning of the year.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Stage	What you might see
Home language use	Children use only their home language with teachers and other children.
Non-verbal period	Children limit (or stop) the use of their home language, as they realize that their words are not understood by others. This period can last from a few months to one year. Children may use gestures or pantomime to express their needs.
Early Speech	Children begin using one, and two word phrases in English, and name objects. They may use groups of words such as 'stop it', 'fall down', or 'shut up', although they may not always use them appropriately.
Conversation	Children begin to use simple sentences in English like the ones they hear in their environment. They may begin to form their own sentences using the words they have learned. Like all young children, they gradually increase the length of their sentences.
Use of 'academic' language at school	Children begin to acquire English associated with specific content knowledge while they continue to develop social language.

HOMEWORK

It is school policy that 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 next section on 'How Parents can Help' to see what sorts of things you can do to support the development of your child.

In Kindergarten students should do 10 minutes of homework per night. This homework may include: reading small early reader books that the child has already read at school during guided reading, learning first spelling words or doing a Math activity. This homework will be clearly outlined by the child's teacher and will be relevant to the weekly classroom program. It is recommended that reading take up about half of the child's weekly homework time.

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,
- 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. Perhaps read in front of your child, or you could read a book with them. You might enroll yourself in our school library to lend 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 surfing the Internet together are also ways you can learn together as a family. You could well be doing all of these things already and by making this effort to 'display' 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 primary school might prompt their ideas.

Introduce Fun Educational Activities

Even if your children don't like some subjects, make sure your family is participating in fun educational activities together. This way your children can see that education and learning do not have to be tedious. Some recommended fun educational activities are:

- Museums
- Aquariums and zoos
- Educational games and puzzles
- Internet activities
- Library visits
- Educational-based activity books
- Outdoor sports or activities

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, relaxed and 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 of doing 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 administration staff. 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.

HANDWRITING

Most children begin to start writing letters and symbols in Pre-K2. It is normal for children to begin writing in capitals, as these are easier to form, but through demonstration and practice children gradually learn the formation of lower case letters as well. Children learn a lot about the form of letters through alphabet materials, magnetic letters, alphabet puzzles and alphabet books. We will help your child develop the fine motor skills needed for writing.

- You can do the following activities at home to help develop handwriting skills:
- Use of scissors at home to cut a variety of paper
- Play with play dough
- Encourage your child to write his/her name, remembering to use a capital only for the first letter of the name.
- Encourage your child to use pincer grip by gripping with thumb and index finger.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education in the Early Childhood is of utmost importance. At AISR we have a specialist P.E. Teacher (Mr. Stuart Brown) who works with the classroom teachers to develop and monitor your child's physical ability. P.E. lessons are 30 minutes long, and take place twice per week, usually in the school gymnasium. The children are required to keep a pair of non-marking indoor shoes at school to wear for these lessons. The children do not change into other clothes for these lessons, but should be appropriately dressed for running, jumping and climbing on these days. The lessons are high energy and action packed!

At the Kindergarten level the children begin additional swimming lessons on Fridays. They are driven to a nearby swimming pool (De Wilgenring), where Dutch swimming teachers take them for a half hour lesson. The lessons are aimed at building initial confidence in the water, and developing basic strokes. The children are required to bring a towel and a swimsuit (no long or baggy shorts for boys) in a drawstring bag. The children may not wear jewelry in the pool. Swimming goggles and hats are not necessary, and are discouraged by the teachers.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

A student's progress and achievement is reported to the parents through the use of informal conferences in the October and February, as well as through report cards at the end of each semester. A schedule of open house and parent-teacher conferences is printed in the school calendar and is distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.

Communication between home and school is vital. Therefore, parents are encouraged to contact the school as often as they deem necessary in order to maintain communication.

We ask that parents respect the schedules of teachers, teacher aides, and students, and NOT interrupt them while they are in class.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Parental permission is given for participation in field trips through signing the form at the back of this handbook. **Notices of field trips are sent home to parents by teachers prior to each excursion. Field trip arrangements and schedules must be approved by the Principal in advance.** School transportation, if available, will be used. On all school sponsored trips involving students, provision will be made for proper supervision by School employees. Parents may be asked to assist in such supervision. Parents will be asked to pick up their children at school if the field trip arrives back after 3 o'clock.

SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS

The school sponsors many activities and events during the school year. In addition to the holidays mentioned in the Celebrations Policy, these events might include:

- Seasonal Programs (December)
- Rice Festival (February)
- Creative Arts evenings (May)
- AISR Field Days (May or June)
- Musical / Dramas

Other important events are listed in the school calendar. Events are published in the Shark and on the school Web Page (www.aisr.nl) so parents know when they will occur.

CELEBRATIONS POLICY

There are several events during the year that all staff and students in the Elementary School will celebrate:

Fall:

Hallowe'en: Organized by the classroom teacher and room parent/s. Each class will attend the Halloween Parade.

Thanksgiving: A Thanksgiving Lunch is organized by the PTSA. The students present a short musical interlude prior to the lunch.

Winter:

Sinterklaas: This is part of the Dutch curriculum and is organized by the Dutch Department. Sinter Klaas visits the school and all the students welcome him in the Gym with a program of songs and dance.

Seasonal Celebration: This will be celebrated in each class in December. Teachers may coordinate this with the room parent(s) or parent volunteers.

Spring:

Valentine's Day: The Student Council organizes the sale of roses.

Easter: An "Easter" activity is optional and will be organized by the classroom teacher.

Summer:

End of Year: There are several events to mark the end of the school year

- Kindergarten - Celebration Signing of Yearbook (usually takes place on the second to last day between 2:00 and 3:00)
- All students attend the End of Year Program (the last Friday).
- All students receive an ice-cream before going home

ROOM PARENTS

Many teachers like to have room parents to assist in planning for parties and various activities throughout the year. Not all teachers require the assistance of room parents. For parents interested in volunteering, please contact your child's teacher.

BIRTHDAY PARTY POLICY

The school asks that invitations for birthday parties outside of school, only be distributed at school only if invitations are given to all students in the class.

Please ask the classroom teacher if you would like to hold a party in the classroom – this should be at the teacher's discretion due to schedules and potential academic interruptions.

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 in advance if you want to do this.

MEDICAL OFFICE

AISR has a qualified nurse who is situated on the ground floor beside the school office. As soon as a child starts school it is vital that the school nurse and class teachers are notified of all health related problems such as asthma, epilepsy and allergies e.g. to foods such as peanuts, milk, chocolate, and food coloring. Please be sure to include such information on the health form upon your arrival to school. All health information you provide is held in strict confidence and only shared on a need- to- know basis. Parents are notified of a head injury or a serious illness or injury requiring further treatment.

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
- Excessive fatigue or tiredness
- Skin or eye irritation
- Excessive runny nose

Please make sure your child is well enough to return to school after an illness. If he/she returns to school too quickly, it is possible for the illness to return and/or spread to others.

If your child develops an illness at school he/she will see the school nurse. If your child needs attention, you will be contacted to take your child home.

“A healthy child s bedtime is no later than 8 p.m!”

FIRE AND EVACUATION

The school will hold fire and/or evacuation drills to prepare for an emergency. Each class will be led by a teacher to a designated area and remain quiet until all are accounted for. We do everything in our power to ensure your child’s well being is taken care of while he/she is attending school.

If you are visiting the school please ensure you sign in at the office. For safety purposes, AISR keeps a record of who is present at the school so we can account for everyone’s safety.

We have a committed emergency response team who are actively keeping the school safe and ensuring our safety procedures are of a high standard.

SNACK AND LUNCH

Please send healthy snacks (chopped fruit or vegetables, cheese and crackers) and a drink for our daily 15-min morning snack time. Look for items that your child can open and manage with minimal assistance. PLEASE DO NOT send sweets, chocolate, candy, or an excess of food. This is meant to be a snack, not a meal.

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. We do not handle any money for the school purchased meals. Please contact the cafeteria regarding the purchase of lunch cards. Please review the day's menu with your child so she/he is aware of the lunch selections to choose. Home lunches should also be planned and packed in a manner that will allow the child to open and/or eat with minimal assistance. We ensure that each child eats as much he/she can.

Pre-K1 and 2 eat in their classroom where there is a chance to practice table manners and have quiet conversation over lunch.

A lunch brought from home should include a sandwich, fruit, and/or vegetables. Drinks may be purchased at school or brought from home but should not include any 'fizzy' soft drinks. 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. Lunch tickets may be purchased in the office. Each ticket is good for 10 lunches and milks. There is also a sandwich option for those students who do not want a hot lunch. Lunch cards will be put out on the class table in the cafeteria prior to lunch each day.

Students in grades Pre-K through 5 may not purchase cookies, candies etc during the school day.

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

Cafeteria Rules (Grades K-5)

The rules for the cafeteria are very simple and are governed by common sense.

Students are asked to:

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

BUSES

Van service is available on school established routes **to and from home only**. Daily address changes are not allowed. Students must follow the prescribed routes and are not allowed to deviate from them.

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. **Students must present a written note, from the parents, to the transportation coordinator, Ms Chris Delury, prior to 09:00 for any changes in their normal route.** 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.

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.

Don't wear too many layers. The school building is kept warm inside. An undershirt, shirt and one jumper/sweater is 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, jumpers/sweaters and cardigans.

We expect the children to change their shoes regularly during the day. They must have:

- **a pair of outdoor shoes,**
- **a pair of indoor shoes (with non-marking soles for Gym lessons) and**
- **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 there is a little bit of rain.

Compulsory!

- A pair of rubber boots to be kept at school for wet days.
- A waterproof coat with a hood
- Comfortable rather than 'cute' clothes suitable for physical or messy activities.

Compulsory!

- **Spare** Clothes - Including underwear and socks
- **Sun-cream** and wipes
- **Hats** for sunny days

Fantastic!

- Trousers with elastic waists
- Velcro shoes
- Loose fitting clothes (especially on PE days).

Not so good!

- Shoes with laces
- Tight clothes
- Skirts and tights (especially on P.E and swimming days.)
- Belts
- Coats with difficult fastenings
- Open toed sandals

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles are asked to return them in 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 cafeteria

FACILITIES

Library

Elementary students come to the library once a week. Students in Pre-K1 begin these weekly visits after the December vacation. During this time, students will listen to a story or practice an information skill and then chose books to take home. Books are loaned for a two-week period. Although the whole class comes to the library once a week, students are welcome to exchange books on their own every day.

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

- **Pre-K1 & 2 - 1 book**
- **Kindergarten - 1 book**

Library bags are provided for each student. Books must be returned within 2 weeks, but may be renewed. Please help your child to return his/her library books on time.. It is always fun to select new books. We strongly encourage parents to read/browse the library books with their child. The Library catalog can be browsed online at: <http://195.64.90.165:2000/ais/guestmenu.jsp>.

Overdue notices are sent out monthly. Bills will be sent home for very late or lost books. When a notice or bill is sent home, please help your child locate the missing book(s). *Parents are also welcome to have their own library card. The best times for visits are first thing in the morning or just before dismissal.* The Library generally hosts several Book Fairs per school year. The details of these events will be posted in the Shark, the school newspaper.

BEHAVIOR POLICY AND AISR GOLDEN RULES

The American International of Rotterdam is committed to providing a caring, secure, positive and respectful environment in which students can learn and develop as individuals and where adults can help them to do so. AISR's Community of Respect actively supports all behaviors which enhance learning and support the development of healthy interpersonal relationships.

AISR GOLDEN RULES

- Show **RESPECT** for others
- Be **CARING** towards others
- Show **RESPONSIBILITY** with all of your actions
- **COOPERATE** with others at all times
- Show **TOLERANCE** in your actions towards others
- Be **HONEST**, tell the truth at all times
- Show **APPRECIATION** for AISR
- **BELIEVE** in yourself

Please support us at school by encouraging your child to follow these 'Golden Rules'.

Computer Use

Most AISR computers are networked to the internet. Therefore, all students must follow the appropriate rules governing computer and internet use. A copy of the adopted rules and procedures will be provided to all students in their computer classes.

Electronic Games/Portable Music Players/Mobile Phones

The elementary school staff recommends that any electronic games and portable music players be left at home. The elementary faculty does not consider it educationally sound for these items to be brought to school. If a child brings one of these items to school, it will be held by the teacher and given to the child at the end of the day to be taken home.

Playground Rules

Playground rules are simply based on safety and common sense. Students are asked to:

- **BE GENTLE**
- **BE KIND AND HELPFUL**
- **PLAY WELL WITH OTHERS**
- **REMEMBER THE SAFETY RULES**
- **DO NOT HURT OTHERS**
- **DO NOT HURT ANYBODY'S FEELINGS**
- **TAKE CARE OF THE PLAYGROUND**
- **DO NOT SPOIL OTHERS GAMES**
- **HAVE A HAPPY RECESS**

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, or to racial, ethnic, religious, age, or disabled individuals or groups. Students who believe they are the victim 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.

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, his possessions, and locker 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.

SCHEDULE

Official Hours

Official school hours for students in:

- Pre-Kindergarten 1 (Half-day) are 08:15 until 11:45.
- Pre-Kindergarten 1 (Full day) and Pre-Kindergarten 2 are 08:15 until 15:00 (Mon. Tues. Thurs. and Fri.) and 08:15 – 11:45 on Wednesday.
- Kindergarten hours are 08:15 until 15:00 (lunch is approximately 45 minutes).

On several Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout the year, the school day will end at 11:30. Early dismissal days are used by the staff to concentrate on curriculum development and modification. The dates are noted on the school calendar. The office is open daily from 08:00 until 17:00.

Each student in the Early Childhood Department has recess periods during the day as well as a minimum 45 minute lunch/recess period. Pre-K1 and Pre-K2 have a short rest time after lunch, which is usually 30 minutes, and may involve a story or quiet relaxing music. Children are encouraged to wake up and begin activities after this time.

Attendance

It is very important that students are in school every day. Regular school attendance is essential to the progress and achievement of the student. The school has a very generous vacation policy. We ask parents **not** to extend the period of time students are away from school except in emergencies. Worksheets and extra assignments cannot take the place of a quality education in a collaborative environment. If a child should be absent for more than 20 school days during the year, he/she has missed too much material that could cause gaps in the child's education.

The staff and administrators will determine whether the child should be promoted to the next grade. It is the responsibility of the parents to contact the school between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. if a student is going to be absent on that day.

Only parents may verify a student's absence. If a parent is unable to get through by telephone, then an e-mail with a cc to the office staff or a signed excuse must be sent with the student on the day of return to school. It is important that parents contemplating a vacation should try to arrange the time to coincide with the vacation period of the school calendar.

If this is not possible then the parents must present to the Principal, at least two weeks in advance, a written request to be excused for a holiday.

Tardies

We encourage parents to allow their children to begin each day on a positive note. 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 during which we can resolve the problem with the school administration.

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

Dropping off and Picking Up Students

At the beginning of the year Pre-K1 parents are allowed to accompany their children into the building at 8:15 a.m. In the second semester the Pre-K1 students should wait for their teacher to come to the playground at 8:15, but should then come inside *without* their parents. The children are quite capable by this stage, to prepare themselves for the day.

Pre-K2 and Kindergarten students should remain outside, and line up when they hear the second bell. Parents who bring their children to school are requested to stay on the playground until the teacher comes out to pick up the students. Between 7:45 and 8:15, teachers are very busy preparing for the school day. If it is raining, the children may go to the cafeteria until their teacher comes to collect them.

Once the children have come inside we encourage them to change their shoes, hang up their coats and unpack their bags independently. After the first week of school parents should not come inside to help get their child organized for the day. The children are capable of doing this themselves, and are often slowed down by parents who try to help. We encourage the children to sign themselves up for lunch and put their bags in the appropriate places. This builds their self-confidence and independence.

Parents should try to be prompt when collecting children after school or after school activities. The school can not operate as a 'baby sitting' service.

After school activities are planned by the AISR professional staff for the time period allotted. Staff members do these activities as volunteers and, therefore, would like to be released on time. If parents are continually late in picking up a student, the student may be asked not to continue in the activity.

Leaving School Grounds

For the safety of the students, at no time is any elementary student of AISR to leave school grounds during the school day without a parent or guardian picking them up 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. Students who must leave campus during the school day must bring written permission from home so that the teachers are aware and can dismiss the student at the appropriate time

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 Chairman 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 by written notice (if possible) or by the emergency telephone tree located in the AISR telephone directory. Changes in parent contact info. should be reported in a timely manner to the school office and the classroom teacher.

Parents are urged to make decisions about the safety of their children during any potentially dangerous situation. The safety of students is of prime importance and parents should make final determination as to whether or not to send a child to school during a potentially dangerous situation.

ADMISSION AND PLACEMENT/ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to AISR shall be determined by the Elementary Principal and the Admissions Committee: Ms. Sharice Welch (School Counsellor) and as needed, Ms. Katie Carlson (Learning Resources).

Admission shall be based on data submitted as required by the professional staff to determine:

1. The potential of the applicant to benefit from the educational services available.
2. The capacity of AISR to meet the educational needs of the applicant.

Admission shall not be denied because of nationality, race, or creed. Student applicants shall be accepted for admission unless there is reason to believe that admission is not in the best interest of the applicant or the School.

The School wishes to accept all qualified applicants and shall make every effort to provide facilities needed for the expected enrollment. Whenever all qualified applicants cannot be accommodated, all students enrolled as of the end of the previous school year shall automatically be enrolled for the following year; new applicants shall then be considered for admission on the basis of the date the application is received in the office. If a waiting list is necessary, qualified applicants will be admitted on first-come/first-served basis as space becomes available.

Students with Special Needs

The following points outline the extent and style of the special needs program at AISR:

- a. Admission for all students with special needs will be limited to mild needs only.
- b. All students with special needs will be required to furnish previous I.E.P. 's (individual educational plans), formal medical evaluations and all previous records to be reviewed by the admissions committee.
- c. All students with special needs will be placed on a conditional enrollment for one semester (two quarters). At the end of the first semester, the admissions committee will reassess the enrollment for the second semester.

Ages of Attendance

Pre-Kindergarten 1 is available for students who are three (3) years old on or before October 20 of the year of entry.

Pre-Kindergarten 2 is available for students who are four (4) years old on or before October 20 of the year of entry.

Total enrollment in a Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten class should be limited to 18 students. However, when enrollment reaches 15 students, a part-time aide/s should be hired to assist the teacher.

Kindergarten is a normal prerequisite for entry into grade 1. For entry into Kindergarten, students should be 5 on or before October 20 of the year of entry.

In general, students should be six (6) on or before October 1 of the year of entry into grade 1. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Elementary Principal.

Retention

The school believes that all possible efforts need 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 in a case by case manner.

VERIFICATION DOCUMENT

The Early Childhood Handbook establishes the guidelines and administrative rules and presents the Board Policies that guide the school, the staff, and the students.

We request that all parents read this handbook with their child so that there is a joint understanding of its contents. After you have reviewed this handbook with your child, please sign below and return this form to the school office.

I have read the Early Childhood School Handbook with my child.

FIELD TRIPS and SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS

Parental permission is given for participation in field trips and school sponsored events by signing this form. Notification about trips will be send home prior to each excursion or event.

I grant permission for my student to participate in AISR-sponsored field trips and special events.

USE of STUDENT IMAGE VERIFICATION

We request permission for the American International School of Rotterdam to use photographs and videos of the below named student on the American International School of Rotterdam website (www.aisr.nl) and in print materials (such as the Shark and school brochures) promoting programs at AISR. Student first names and grade levels may be used, however students' last names and other personal information will not be published.

I grant permission for the American International School of Rotterdam to use photographs and videos on the American International School Website.

Student Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____