



Welcoming Committee – Elckerlyc International

FAQs

Most information can be found in our “Supplementary Information Pack for Parents” document which was recently sent to you and/or in the information you may have already received from the school office. For ease however, we have decided to provide you with a summary of the questions that have been “frequently asked” during the summer holidays, since the start of the Welcoming Committee a few years back.

If you do not find the answer to your questions on any of the documents that the school or the Welcoming Committee have sent to you, or the school internet site, please send an E mail to parents.welcome@gmail.com. You are also most welcome to contact us for any other general questions you may have or just to chat.....

Where should I park?

The school does not have a private car park. Parking is therefore on the street. You may park along Klimopzoom, at the front of the school or Lisdoddekreek, at the back of the school. There are also side roads/small car---parks leading off these two residential streets. Please do not park in the car park at the side of the school as this is intended for residents. This car---park is also often difficult to access and reversing/three---point turns are necessary. As it is a main thoroughfare for children arriving and departing from school this can result in dangerous situations.

A map of parking areas around the school is kept in the school office. You can collect this when term starts. Parking can be difficult around school but it depends also on how your morning schedule runs. If you aim to arrive in the school area between 8.15 --- 8.20 you should always be able to park within a two minute walk.

Please also read the information in the Supplementary Information Pack for Parents document (Welcome Pack).

Is there a canteen/restaurant/place to heat food at school?

There is no canteen or “school dinners” at school. Children eat in their classrooms for approx 20 --- 25 mins then go outside to play. The lunch sessions are supervised by parent volunteers. You therefore need to provide your child with a snack for morning break and a packed lunch. What children eat depends very much on their nationality! Mainly lunch is a packed lunch (sandwiches, pita bread, veggies/salad/eggs/fruit, etc.) or you can send your child in with a small thermos with hot pasta, soup, etc. if they are used to eating a warm lunch at lunch---time. There is no facility for heating food for the children at school. Most children have similar food boxes (one for snack time in the morning

and a separate one for lunch) plus a drink container. These are really easy to find in Holland before term---time in Blokker or the toy shops (Bart Smit or Intertoys), but any plastic airtight boxes would do.....

Is there a school bus?

No, there is no transport run by the school. There is a bus that is run by ESA (European Space Agency) for employees' children who are over the age of 4. There are also buses run by the local After---School facilities for children attending.

Is it possible to work at school on a voluntary basis?

Lunch Supervisor

As stated above lunch sessions are supervised by parent volunteers: if you are available occasionally in the day---time; be it once a month, fortnightly, weekly or daily, you may volunteer! This is a great way of meeting other parents and getting to know the kids in your child's class. A nominal amount of 9 euros is paid per duty to cover possible travel costs. Please contact our Lunch Time Coordinator Shoba at shobavenkat@yahoo.com to learn more.

Classroom Representative

Every year teachers ask for one or two Classroom Representatives. The role mainly involves acting as a communication liaison between teachers and parents when help in the classroom, on school trips, school celebrations, etc. is required. Some will also organise social events for class parents such as coffee mornings, parent nights out, etc. And last but not least (as you will not find this in the official guide that the school sends out at the beginning of the school year), they also usually organise a Christmas and/or end of year present from children/parents for the teacher! Shhhhhhh! ;---)

Classroom Helper for creative activities, cultural activities, class parties, sporting events, etc.

How often you may have the opportunity/be solicited to help in class will depend heavily on the age group of your child and the individual teacher. If you are interested and available to help in class as and when the opportunity arises you simply need to inform your child's teacher(s).

School Helper during miscellaneous events

You may want to help in class or coordinate something during one of the following events: Book Week, Football, Chess, and Table tennis Tournaments, All School Project Week and the end of year Summer Party. This list is not exhaustive.

Blokkentoren

The "Blokkentoren" consists of an active group of parents helping and supporting school activities. This means that they help with the organisation of various events, such as "Sinterklaas", Christmas, the summer festival and every now and then even a parent's only party.

Library Helper

Occasionally a position may arise in the school Library. The library opens on Wednesday and Friday mornings and runs with a team of two or three parent helpers per session. Should a position arise, the Library Coordinator would advertise.

Welcoming Committee – Volunteer on the Family Helpline List or Welcoming Committee Member

This was set up three years back by a small group of parents and as you now know, helps new families settling in by providing information and support and also by answering questions from families simply enquiring about the school. It often happens that new parents who have been “helped” by the Welcoming Committee on their arrival join our Family Helpline Volunteer List the following year and kindly start helping others.....

MR Representative

The Medezeggenschapsraad (MR) is the only body of parents and staff which has an official status. School management and the Board of Governors (comprising of elected representatives) have to consult/inform the MR when making decisions which affect the school. The MR is also the body that is able to bring issues of any nature before the school management and/or board of governors and request an answer or solution. It is therefore bound by a legal framework and has its own constitution. Parents should contact an MR Representative if they have any issue or concern to raise. Parents may also request time to speak and personally address an issue at the monthly meetings. These contacts should be limited to issues of general concern. Personal matters should be addressed to teachers, area coordinators, Director and Board.

Do most non---Dutch speakers remain in the International System throughout their schooling in The Netherlands?

Kids can remain in the International System for their entire schooling. Some parents move to the Dutch system through choice if their children’s Dutch is good enough. Children receive Dutch lessons at school but those that transfer usually attend some kind of Dutch childcare facility after school or with a Dutch speaking Nanny or are lucky enough to live in a neighbourhood where they learn from the local children at the park. Some children transfer to our Dutch Montessori side of the school or another school.

Where do Elckerlyc children go after Group 7?

The logical route from Elckerlyc is Rijnlands Lyceum in Oegstgeest. This is an International School comprising of a Dutch only side, a dual language side (TTO) and an International, English teaching side. There is the British School (BSN) in Voorschoten and the American School (ASH) in Wassenaar. There is also the International School of the Hague (ISH). The last three are all private school options and are thus more expensive compared to Rijnlands which, as Elckerlyc, is partly subsidised by the Dutch Education Ministry. In addition, if you were to live in Leiden the logistics are slightly more complicated, but it is possible. The majority of children from Elckerlyc go to Rijnlands.

Is it possible to take music lessons, sports activities at school?

Music

There is a company that comes in to school and gives music lessons www.virtuosi.nl There are also many independent music teachers offering private lessons around the Leiden area. You could also look at the www.BplusC.nl website which is the Leidse volkshogeschool and offers lessons in everything from music, to Dutch to Italian cooking! We can also make enquiries amongst other families for any other requests.

Football

This is not technically offered by the school but by an ex-parent of the school who is a qualified Football Coach and runs his own football coaching business. He provides football training every Friday afternoon at a local football pitch from age 5. This is a popular activity for girls and boys mainly in Groups 2 – 6.

Which holiday system does the school follow?

Holiday (Vacation) dates can be found on the school website.

The school follows the Dutch School Calendar and there are just six weeks in summer. Some of the holiday periods are staggered between regions (thus sometimes we return to school as early as mid-August and sometimes in September). We then have one week in October, two weeks at Christmas, one week in February, a long weekend at Easter and two weeks Spring break end April/beginning May. There are a few long holiday weekends also.

Does the school provide language lessons?

The school provides lessons in English as a Foreign Language (EAL) and Dutch. If you seek lessons in other languages you need to find an independent teacher/language school. Many children at school do have lessons in other languages (typically where there is a non-Dutch/English speaking parent in the family), such as French, Japanese, Chinese, German, Italian, Hebrew, Swedish, etc. If you would like information about languages it may be wise to ask us to contact one of the families on our "Family Helpline List" on your behalf, who speaks this language, as they may have some ideas.

Does the school provide After-School care?

There is no After-school facility at school but there are plenty of After-School facilities in the local area which also include pick up from school. A whole section is dedicated to this in the Supplementary Information Pack for parents document.

Do you know of any pre---school / after school facility in English?

One of our school Mums runs a playschool for pre ---schoolers in English and Dutch www.rainbowpreschool.nl. For other options please consult www.homeinleiden.nl or www.access---nl.org.

How can I get from my home to school with public transport?

The Leiden area has a good public transport network. All information about bus routes and times can be found on the following site www.9292.nl or you could request to be put in contact with one of our volunteers on the Family Helpline List who may live in the area you intend moving to for information or even the possibility of a lift share?!

My child will be cycling alone to school– how can I find out who lives in our area in order that they may cycle with someone?

In the first instance please contact us indicating your new address in the Leiden area and the age of your child. It is very likely that one of us will know someone who lives near you who may be interested in such an arrangement or may know of someone else who might be.

What does my child need on the first day?

On the first day they will need the following: a bag to carry a snack for mid---morning and a packed lunch plus drink/drink container and shoes to wear indoors. You may also want to put in a raincoat (even if it isn't actually raining....this is Holland and the weather is very changeable!) You will be informed later in the week about Gym times at which point you will need to send them in with shorts, T---shirt and gym shoes. Gym bags will be given to your child by their class teacher.

What are gym shoes? What are indoor shoes?

Typical gym shoes are black, white, pink or navy and have semi---supple shoes and two Velcro straps. Before term time they can be found in most big shoe shops in Leiden. Two shops worth visiting for such items are Nelson (in Leiden or the Leiderdorp Winklehof), Van Haren (Leiden) and Piet Kerkhof which can be found just off the Willem de Zwijgerlaan between Leiderdorp and the station).

Children are requested to change their shoes when they come in from outdoors so as not to bring mud, sand, etc. into the classroom. Typical indoor shoes are gym shoes, slippers (not the ig, b fluffy animal type!), croc style shoes, etc. There are stairs in school so please keep footwear sensible.

When will I find out if I have a place for my child?

It is important that you contact the school **before the summer holidays** (7th of July 2017) if you are in doubt as to whether or not you have a place. If this is/was not possible, feel free to contact us and we will endeavour to contact the school on your behalf.