



EUROPEAN SCHOOL BERGEN



Digital Brochure for the European School Bergen, “Europe in a School”

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Why come to us? A message from the director

My name is Steve Lewis, I am from the United Kingdom, and I am the Director of the European School Bergen (also just known as “ESB”) where I have worked since 2008. This digital guide will hopefully give you enough information to persuade you to consider our school as the ideal choice for the education of your children of any age! With a creche for 2-4 year olds followed by a Nursery, Primary and Secondary cycle, a pupil could be in our school from the time they learn to walk and talk to when they leave for university. It is even a language school which offers additional courses for pupils, as well as for adults in the building. We really do have “Europe in a School”, and it is hard to imagine what that means until you have been to visit us. I have really enjoyed working in such an international and stimulating environment, and our many visitors are always impressed by the diversity they see in our school.

For over half a century many generations of graduates have gone on to successful international careers. Until recently the European Schools were mainly available for the employees of the institutions of the European Union. Our European institution is the Joint Research Centre for Energy and Transport in Petten. Now our system is expanding and new European Schools are opening in different parts of Europe. There are currently around 35,000 pupils who have a European School education in Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Italy, Spain, the U.K., Greece, Ireland, Estonia, Finland, Denmark - and of course in the Netherlands. Our school has some 550 pupils and 100 members of staff, some of whom work for us as distance learning teachers. We follow the European Schools curriculum which leads to the European Baccalaureate, and this well-recognised qualification provides entry to universities around Europe and beyond. All the information about the European School system can be found on the official website www.eurasc.eu

Our pupils at the ESB go into one of three language sections, or streams - the Dutch-speaking, French-speaking or English-speaking. In their language section they follow the curriculum in that language. The pupils then choose one of the working languages of the E.U. (French, German or English) as their second language. Later in the Secondary cycle they study History and Geography, as well as other subjects, in their second language. We also offer many other languages as Language 3 and 4; we have in total 17 languages in which we teach mother tongue; and we also offer Latin in the Secondary cycle. As a result our pupils have the opportunity to leave the school with highly developed language skills taught by native speakers.

The European Schools curriculum is not just about languages, however. We do many things to help to develop European citizenship through subjects like “European Hours” in the Primary, as well as to develop strong scientific and mathematical skills. In these areas we have excellent links with the Joint Research Centre for Transport and Energy in Petten. Our pupils also have opportunities in sports, arts and music, and there is a full and varied programme of extra-curricular activities which is of particular interest for the primary pupils. Many excursions, projects, competitions trips and visits in the local area and across Europe further enrich the learning experience of the pupils. With such a start in life our graduates go on to top universities around the world. The UK and the Netherlands are particularly popular destinations for our pupils.

Our school is located in the very attractive town of Bergen in the province of North-Holland. We are in an area of great natural beauty, close to the beach, forest and dunes, and within easy reach of the town of Alkmaar and the surrounding small towns and villages. We are also close enough to Amsterdam and Haarlem for many of our pupils to make the journey every day - about 20% of our pupils travel from Amsterdam. It is about 45km from the centre of Amsterdam. With school fees which are affordable, as well as the offer of a quality education funded and monitored by the member states of the European Union and the European Commission we have something to offer which few schools can match. Most importantly, we have places available in our school at all levels. Come and visit us and see the advantages of a European education for yourselves!

Steve Lewis, Director

What do we stand for? – our vision and mission

Mission of the European Schools

The quotation below summarises the aims of the European Schools since their beginning in 1953:

"Educated side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, it will be borne in upon them as they mature that they belong together. Without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride, they will become in mind Europeans, schooled and ready to complete and consolidate the work of their fathers before them, to bring into being a united and thriving Europe." - Jean Monnet

General Objectives of the European Schools

- to give pupils confidence in their own cultural identity – the bedrock for their development as European citizens;
- to provide a broad education of high quality, from Nursery level to university entrance;
- to develop high standards in the mother tongue and in foreign languages;
- to develop mathematical and scientific skills throughout the whole period of schooling;
- to encourage a European and global perspective overall and particularly in the study of the human sciences;
- to encourage creativity in music and the plastic arts and an appreciation of all that is best in a common European artistic heritage; to develop physical skills and instil in pupils an appreciation of the need for healthy living through participation in sporting and recreational activities;
- to offer pupils professional guidance on their choice of subjects and on career/university decisions in the later years of the secondary school;
- to foster tolerance, co-operation, communication and concern for others throughout the school community and beyond;
- to cultivate pupils' personal, social and academic development and to prepare them for the next stage of education.

Mission statement of the European School Bergen

"As one of the original Type 1 European Schools, we have for over half a century successfully provided a languages-rich, differentiated, all-round quality education from kindergarten to university entrance for the children of employees at the Joint Research Centre Petten and other institutions of the European Union. This educational opportunity is also available for all children in the local and international community who can find in the European Schools a system flexible enough to meet their current needs, and in preparation for the future.

Providing schooling in three language sections, Dutch, French or English, with subjects taught in the second language, and a strong emphasis on Sciences and Mathematics, this unique and challenging education culminates in the highly recognised European Baccalaureate qualification which provides access to a wide range of universities in Europe and beyond.

Beyond academic achievement we encourage young people to develop other skills as part of a caring "one school, one learning community" educated in an international, multilingual atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect in a rapidly expanding European model of education based on a series of core values and competences for lifelong learning to prepare for global citizenship."

Our Core Values

Everyone

- Is listened to and is entitled to give their views
- Is respected and shows respect
- Appreciates the diversity in, and European identity of, the school
- Appreciates the academic and other opportunities the school can provide
- Knows what is going on because of good communication systems
- Feels a part of the school community

Pupils

- Feel safe and are happy at school, and enjoy attending the school
- Are motivated, stimulated and encouraged to reach their full potential and achieve the highest possible academic standards using a range of formative and summative assessment tools
- Have their individual needs met
- Are able to communicate well in different languages
- Are expected to conform to the standards of behaviour and tolerance expected in the school

Staff

- Are valued and supported by management and each other
- Are able to develop skills and talents, and in particular their language skills
- Understand, appreciate and respect the work of their colleagues
- Work as a team across the whole school, and achieve this partly by peer observation in different parts of the school
- Who teach can motivate, support and inspire pupils of all abilities, and teach them not only WHAT to learn, but HOW to learn
- Expect the highest possible academic standards
- Are well qualified and interested in their own ongoing professional development

Parents

- Are well informed and involved in the education of their children, and are welcome in classes to support the learning of their children and others
- Are open to asking teachers and the management for help and support in any areas of their childrens' education
- Can send their children to the school with the confidence that they will have a quality education
- Feel part of the community and are welcome at the school
- Support the school through the Parents Association and in other ways

Management

- Lead by example in the promotion of a European culture in the school
- Create a positive listening culture in the school
- Resolve conflicts in a constructive manner
- Present a positive view of the school to the outside world, and make it clear what it is that the European School system can offer
- Put teaching and learning at the centre of all decision-making
- Is fully informed of the rules and regulations of the system, and is able to interpret them to find the most effective educational solutions for the pupils

What do we offer?

The European Schools

- The original 14 European Schools were set up for the families of employees of the institutions of the European Union, and other local and international families may join if there are spaces available.
- There are currently around 35,000 pupils who have a European School education in Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, the United Kingdom., Greece, Ireland, Estonia, Finland, Denmark and of course in The Netherlands.
- In an international school there is one working language, with other languages taught as foreign languages.
- In a European School the curriculum is delivered in different languages and it can meet the needs of children from many different backgrounds.

Recognition of the European Schools

- The European Baccalaureate and our curriculum are recognised throughout the European Union as equivalent to the national system, and this makes it easy for pupils to transfer in and out at any stage of their education.
- The European Baccalaureate is a well-recognised qualification which leads to entry to top universities in Europe and around the world.
- Not all of our pupils stay until the end of their education, and are able to return to the national system at the right level. This is guaranteed by our official table of equivalences.

Our curriculum

- The curriculum is unique to the European Schools and combines modern approaches to education across Europe based on the eight key competences for lifelong learning
- Our curriculum is recognised throughout the European Union as equivalent to the national systems, and this makes it easy for pupils to transfer in and out at any stage of their education.
- In the European School Bergen the curriculum is delivered in three different languages: English, French and Dutch.
- For detailed information about the programmes in the European School Bergen, and in all the European Schools, go to the website www.eursec.eu and on “Studies and Certificates”.
- All programmes are approved by the Board of Governors of the European Schools which consist of representatives from the 28 member state delegations.
- For further information about the rules in the system, and for policies and procedures for Educational Support, go to “Legal Basis” and follow the links in the appropriate language.
- All documents are in English and French, and many are published in other languages.

Moving from Nursery to Primary

- Pupils join the Nursery class In September at the age of 4 (or if they turn 4 in the same calendar year) and spend two years in the Nursery class following the Early Years Curriculum.
- During the second year in the Nursery there is a programme for them to become familiar with the move into the Primary cycle, and parents are invited to a meeting.
- They will also be required to choose the Language 2 which is one of the working languages of the European Union, English, French or German.
- The language chosen must be different from the Language 1 of the child.

Moving from Primary to Secondary

- There is a full transition programme.
- The pupils in P5 have opportunities to visit the Secondary area of the school and also to talk to the teachers and pupils in S1 so that they are well prepared.
- The great advantage of our building is that in practice they only have to move from one part of the building to another.
- The use of the lockers, the specialist rooms used, and the different timetables are explained thoroughly.
- There is a parents evening as well so that parents are made aware of the differences as their children make the transition, and there is also information given about the choice of the Language 3.

The European Baccalaureate

- The final qualification is the European Baccalaureate (EB).
- The EB is the well-recognised leaving qualification of the European Schools and it comes at the end of a two year programme in S6 and S7 (the last two years) which allows pupils to enter higher education.
- Those awarded the certificate have the same rights and benefits as other holders of school leaving certificates in their respective countries in the EU, including the same rights as nationals with equivalent qualifications to seek admission to any university in the European Union and other countries.
- The EB leads to entry to top universities in Europe and around the world.

Higher education and careers guidance

- Applying for the right courses is a complex task, and we have a careers guidance team across the language sections which can provide guidance, support and references for applications to universities and colleges.
- Nearly all of our pupils go on to higher education and the European Schools have good contacts in universities across Europe where our pupils are recognised for their broad, as well as deep, education, their independent learning skills and their language competences.
- Lower down the school the careers advisers help with option choices, and also run a 2-week work experience programme for pupils in the S5 class.

Extra-curricular activities

- Other than the normal school events, musicals, plays, competitions and other activities organised in the school, including the programme of educational trips and visits, there is a full programme of extra-curricular activities organised by the Parents Association.
- A list of activities is published at the start of the school year and pupils can join the activities for a small extra fee if parents are members of the PA.

Health, safety and pupil care

- A school nurse is on the site, and there are first-aiders among the staff.
- The Child Protection Policy covers a range of relevant issues relating to child care, protection and safety, and the school or the Parents Association can give further information if needed.
- Safety and security are taken very seriously in the school.
- In the classroom there are opportunities to discuss issues to do with Personal and Social Education, and pupils are encouraged to express and develop their ideas.

Transport services

- There is a minibus service from Amsterdam, and a public bus service from Alkmaar (scholierenlijn) which stops at the school.

Canteen

- The canteen offers good quality fresh hot and cold meals and snacks, and hot and cold drinks, throughout the day.
- The lunch menus are published on the school website and they change every month.
- Snacks are also available from the vending machines for the secondary pupils.
- The canteen holds the Netherlands Nutrition Centre's School Canteen Plate for 2015.

A brief history of the European School Bergen

On 16 October 1963 the European School in Bergen opened its doors for the first time to support the newly opened Joint Research Centre in Petten. The school was located in a wooden temporary building with five rooms, five nursery pupils, five primary pupils, three teachers, a secretary, a concierge and a Belgian director, Mr Plastria. The school expanded in the temporary building to 18 classrooms, and the aim was to build a permanent building within three years.

ESB was the sixth European School to open, and one year later it had grown from 10 to 68 pupils (20 nursery, 38 primary and 10 secondary) and after this the school grew rapidly in the 1960s. Often it was so overcrowded that the end of a corridor had to be used as a classroom. It took until 1976 for the foundation stone for the permanent new building to be laid on the present site of the school, and in September 1977 the administration and secondary school moved in, followed by the nursery and primary classes in December 1977.

In April 1978 the school was officially opened by HM Princess Beatrix, and on the same occasion she also officially opened the Europahal, the sports hall which was built in collaboration with the local community. Numbers in the school increased to a peak of around 900, but since 2000 they have reduced to the present figure of around 550 with the closure of the Italian and German sections. Now the school has a Dutch, French and English section and it continues to be an important educational facility not only for the children of people working at JRC Petten, but also in the wider local community with many pupils travelling from Amsterdam to attend the school. As more international companies move into the region, and with pressure on school places in the Amsterdam area, our school offers a solution for a quality education for children of all nationalities and backgrounds.

How do pupils join our school?

Are you interested in our school?

- We hope so, and please read the welcome message from the Director for some general information and the FAQs for more specific details.
- You are always most welcome to email us with other questions, and if you would like to visit us you are also most welcome.
- As we offer so many things at our school it is sometimes difficult for you to know what the possibilities are, and we are there to help!

How to apply

- Click on the link on the home page of the website and fill in the Enquiry for Admission Form. We will contact you back as soon as possible.
- If you are interested in the creche please contact Little Europe separately at the following email address: playschoollittleurope@gmail.com

School fees

The annual school fees for the 2016-17 academic year for new parents are as follows. All fees are in euros.

	Ages	Annual school fees
Creche	2-4	contact Little Europe - playschoollittleurope@gmail.com
Nursery	4-6	3.510,67
Primary	6-11	4.827,23
Secondary	11-18	6.582,58
Reductions	4-18	20% for the second child, 40% for the third and other children.

If you already have a child enrolled at the school you should contact us to check the fees.

Admission criteria.

- To join the school pupils must be at least 4 years old, or turning 4 during the calendar year when they start.
- For all pupils there are screening tests to see whether they can fit into the school, and this depends on the age and level of the pupil.
- For the younger pupils we like to see them at the school for a trial day, and we encourage this with the secondary pupils as well who will normally be screened in the Language 1, Language 2 and Mathematics.

Admission for Dutch pupils.

- Special rules apply for Dutch pupils and all applications have to be approved by inspectors from the Ministry of Education.
- We have many Dutch pupils at our school, and we can advise you at the application stage whether you will be able to apply for a place at our school.
- As 40% of our pupils have Dutch nationality there are opportunities for Dutch pupils to join our school, and they will normally be admitted to the Dutch language section.
- So if you are looking for an education with a European and international flair, please apply!

Transport services.

- There is a minibus service from Amsterdam
- There is a public bus service from Alkmaar (scholierenlijn) which stops at the school.

Would you like to work with us?

Seconded teachers

- Vacancies for full-time teachers are usually filled by the Education Ministries of the member states and the recruitment period takes place early in the year.
- The school requests the posts and it is the responsibility of the seconding authority to send the teachers.

Locally recruited teachers

- The school advertises positions as they become available on the school website in the period March-April for the following school year.
- Posts are also advertised in the Dutch press and in all the other European Schools.

Substitute or replacement teachers

- The school is always interested in applications from nursery and primary teachers in all language sections to cover the short-term absence of teachers

Volunteers

- Parent volunteers help in the library and in some of the classes.
- If you are interested in being a volunteer please contact the Deputy Director of the Nursery and Primary Cycles.

Nursery and Primary cycles

A Message from the Deputy Director

My name is Nadia Roofthoof, I am from Belgium, and I have worked in the school since 2013. Together with class teachers and mother tongue teachers of various nationalities, we share the passion for teaching young pupils at nursery and primary level.

In order to support their overall development we offer a structured learning environment with a focus on the participation and well-being of each individual child. We encourage children to be independent learners in an open atmosphere where they can learn basic skills and the self-confidence to develop. In this way it is our aim to contribute to the children's appetite for learning and to build a strong foundation for the future.

Please feel free to request more information on what we do and how we work... and to get a sense of the spirit in our *European* nursery and primary cycle!

Information about the Nursery and Primary cycles

- For detailed information about the programmes in the European School Bergen, and in all the European Schools, go to the website www.eurasc.eu and on "Studies and Certificates".
- All programmes are approved by the Board of Governors of the European Schools which consist of representatives from the 28 member state delegations.

The school day

	Nursery 1 and 2 Ages 4-6	Primary 1 and 2 Ages 6-8	Primary 3, 4 and 5 Ages 8-11
Monday	09:00-16:25	09:00-16:25	09:00-16:25
Tuesday	09:00-13:10	09:00-13:10	09:00-16:25
Wednesday	09:00-13:10	09:00-13:10	09:00-13:10
Thursday	09:00-16:25	09:00-16:25	09:00-16:25
Friday	09:00-13:10	09:00-13:10	09:00-13:10

Nursery classes, M1 and M2

- The children spend their first two years at school in the Nursery classes in the language section or stream in which they have been enrolled.
- As in the rest of the school there are three sections, the English, Dutch and French, and they all follow the Early Education Curriculum of the European Schools.
- Each class is combined so that there are the two age groups in the class. In addition the children have "European Hours" twice per week where they work together in mixed groups and this exposure to other languages at an early age. Most of the activities are creative.
- Towards the end of the second year in the Nursery parents are asked to choose the second language (L2) for their child from the beginning of Primary 1, and this is one of the working languages of the European Union - German, French or English - but it must be different from the Language 1.

- A pupil in the English section with English as L1, for example, would choose German or French as L2. A pupil with, for example, Czech as L1 and who is in the English section, would do English as L2 because it is the language of the section.
- The teaching time for nursery school children is 25 hours and 30 minutes per week, and this broken down into 20 hours of teaching and the rest is recreational time.

Note about Language 1: Children who are entitled to a different Language 1 from the language of the section (Category 1) go out of their class every day for 30 minutes at a time to do the mother tongue/L1 lessons. If you are unsure if you are entitled to this please contact the school.

Primary 1 and 2

- Pupils in Primary 1 (P1) and Primary 2 (P2) are in one of the three language sections (English, Dutch or French) for most of the time.
- In Primary 1 the pupils do the second language (German, French or English) for the first time, and the two years are spent developing the basic skills.
- The syllabus allows for a degree of cross-curricular teaching, and the pupils have time allocated for Music, Art, Physical Education, Religion or Ethics, and Discovery of the World.
- The total teaching time for the P1 and P2 classes is 25 hours and 30 minutes per week.
- From Primary 1 there is some homework to involve parents in the learning process, and to give the children more opportunities for independent learning.

Note about Language 1: Pupils who are entitled to mother tongue teaching different to the language of the section (Category 1) have lessons for 30 minutes every day in their L1 with the specialist teacher when the rest of the class does L2.

Primary 3, 4 and 5

- In Primary 3, 4 and 5 classes the pupils follow a similar structure to that of P1 and P2 in one of the three language sections.
- They also have “European Hours” once per week in which the pupils have classes in a range of areas which take place in mixed language groups. This is a special feature of the European School system, and is a preparation for the Secondary cycle when pupils from different language sections are mixed together more frequently.
- The time for L2 is 45 minutes per day (and for the L1 pupils whose language is different from the language of the section). During P5 there is a transition programme so that the pupils are prepared well for the Secondary cycle, and this includes support with the choice of Language 3.
- The amount of homework increases and there is a maximum of 45 minutes per day in P5. The total teaching time is 27 hours and 15 minutes per week.

Languages

- The first language or Language 1 (L1) is the first priority for the children in the Nursery and primary cycles. For some children this is easier than for others, but we have seen that a solid grounding in the first language gives them confidence when they start to learn other languages.
- For children who have a Language 1 which is not the language of the section they already have the challenge of learning two languages at the same time, and because they spend most of their time in what is their second language environment it generally works very well for them.

- All pupils begin with the Language 2 in any case at the start of Primary 1. In the Primary cycle there are no further formal opportunities to learn other languages, although in European Hours the pupils are exposed to other languages.
- For bilingual pupils, or for pupils who are very talented at languages, there are opportunities to extend language skills by using the services of the language school, Alingua, which operates in the school.
- Pupils who have difficulties with languages can receive some educational support.

Information Technology (ICT)

- The school is well equipped for ICT, and every classroom has at least one computer as well as a beamer/projector and most are also equipped with smartboards which are used extensively.
- There is a fully equipped computer room.
- The wireless network is fast and efficient, and this makes it possible for the pupils to use mobile laptop class units, and they use ICT from an early age.
- ICT is embedded into all areas of the curriculum and pupil management, and teachers are innovative in their use of ICT in the classroom.
- By the time they leave the primary cycle all pupils are confident and independent users of ICT.

Educational Support

- For children who need extra help in managing the curriculum there is support available, either on an individual or a small group basis.
- For children with a special diagnosis from an educational psychologist or other expert it is possible to arrange intensive support.
- The three types of support available are known as General, Moderate and Intensive Support.
- The school follows the policy and procedure documents from the European Schools.

Library and Media Centre

- There is a library and media centre in the Primary part of the school which contains a wide range of books in a number of languages.
- The room is used regularly by the classes, and the resources are renewed and updated on a regular basis.
- There is a librarian who is assisted by parent volunteers .

School trips and outings

- During the Nursery and Primary there are many trips to support the curriculum to museums, centres and other places of interest.
- Even the youngest children in the Nursery classes participate in trips, and the local area provides many opportunities for interesting activities .
- In P5 there is a residential trip which happens every year to a centre in the Netherlands or Belgium.

Events and Projects

- A wide range of events and projects can be found which vary from year to year, although some such as the French “Francophonie” happen every year.
- There are art projects, musical events, opportunities for small plays and performances, participation in Christmas concerts and other such events which enable the pupils to show parents the range of activities carried out during the school day.

- Parents are invited into classes on occasions to see the work being done, and there are other projects related to the curriculum which are carried out from time to time.
- We believe strongly in the importance of going beyond the regular classroom learning environment to provide a more holistic education for the children, and evidence of this can be seen by just walking through the building.

The Creche - Little Europe

- Children who are aged between 2-4 can be enrolled at the creche which is in the school, and which is open during school hours.
- Children go into one class and the teachers/assistants provide them with a stimulating environment in which they are exposed to the languages of the sections they may later join.

Child-care services - AllesKits

- For some parents who work longer hours there is the possibility to enrol children with AllesKits who provide child-care services before and after school for children who come from all language sections.

Secondary cycle

Message from the Deputy Director

My name is Ulvi Soomlais and I am from Estonia. I have been working at the school since September 2013, and the school, and the area of the school, are very different from what I know from my home country. This is a really interesting educational environment to be in with new challenges every day, and for me, as well for as for all of my colleagues in the secondary cycle, working here is a stimulating and fascinating cultural learning experience. I could not do my job completely on my own and have the Educational Advisers who support the work of the cycle with the organisation of so many parts of the school day. We have a wonderful team of teachers, as well as enthusiastic and able pupils - and I really wish that I had had the chance to go to such a school myself!

Information about the programmes in the Secondary Cycle.

- For detailed information about the programmes in the European School Bergen, and in all the European Schools, go to the website www.eurasc.eu and on "Studies and Certificates".
- All programmes are approved by the Board of Governors of the European Schools which consist of representatives from the 28 member state delegations.

The school day

- School starts every day at 09:00 and finishes at 16:25 and the school week is from Monday - Friday.
- For the younger pupils it is normal to have at least one free afternoon every week, and this is often on a Friday.
- The pupils in the upper classes can expect to have their lessons distributed during the week.
- Each lesson is 45 minutes in length with 5 minutes or a longer break.
- In exceptional cases some courses for small groups can start before the beginning of the normal school day if pupils are able to attend, and for some groups the lunch break can be at a different time so that they can be fitted into the timetable and to offer more options.
- Depending on the year group and the options chosen, pupils will have a minimum of 31 lessons and a maximum of 35 lessons per week.

The structure of the full day is shown below:

Start	Period	Start	Period
09:00-09:45	1	12:30-13:15	5
09:50-10:35	2	13:15-14:00	Lunch break (6)
10:40-11:25	3	14:00-14:45	7
11:25-11:40	Short Break	14:50-15:35	8
11:40-12:25	4	15:40-16:25	9

Years S1-S3 - the Lower Secondary classes

- During the first three years of the Secondary cycle the pupils follow mainly the same compulsory courses in their language section as the others.
- Most subjects are taught in the language of the section, and Integrated Science and Human Sciences are taught to cover all the sciences together and History and Geography respectively.

- Subjects such as Art, Music and Sport are taught in “open” language groups so that all sections are mixed with each other, and pupils also have an opportunity to mix with other sections in Language 2 lessons.
- In S1 the pupils begin their Language 3 (currently a choice between Dutch, German, English, French and Spanish).
- In S2 they have the chance to choose Latin, and in S3 ICT.
- Also in S3 pupils study the Human Sciences and Religion/Ethics for the first time in their second language.

Years S4-S5 - the Middle Secondary classes

- In S4 pupils have a wider range of options to choose from.
- The first major choice to be made is whether to do Mathematics as a foundation (4 period) course or a more advanced (6 period) course. This is an important decision to be made, and pupils and parents should take the advice of the teachers before choosing.
- Other choices may involve choosing a fourth language or Economics, or continuing with subjects such as Art, Music, Latin and ICT.
- In addition Integrated Sciences is replaced by separate subjects for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
- Human Sciences is replaced by History and Geography in the second language.
- In these two years the pupils have an opportunity to study a wide range of subjects and find out about their strengths for the future choices in the European Baccalaureate.

Years S6-S7 - the European Baccalaureate classes

- In S5 the pupils make their choices for the European Baccalaureate which is a two year programme.
- They have a wide range of choices which enable the pupil to put together a “package” of subjects which will prepare him or her for courses in higher education.
- There continue to be compulsory courses, including a course in Philosophy.
- In Mathematics there are options again for a foundation (3 period) or more advanced (5 period) or Advanced Maths as an extra option for the more ambitious.
- It is possible for pupils also to do the three sciences if they wish, and if their strengths lie in languages, History or Geography, Art and Music for example, they can specialise more in this direction.
- The marks for the Baccalaureate are made up from 50% in internal examinations and class work in S7, the final year, and 50% from written examinations in 5 subjects (Language 1, Language 2, Mathematics and two options) and oral examinations in 3 subjects which are based on work in the final two years of study.

Choice of options and group sizes.

- With all options throughout the secondary cycle there is a minimum group size of 7, and in S6 and S7 the minimum group size for 4-period options is 5.
- Depending on the course and level it is sometimes possible to open a group with a smaller number of pupils, and sometimes groups are combined with another year group.

Language 1

- A basic principle of the European Schools is that of mother tongue, or dominant language tuition.
- Normally this will be the language of the section in which the pupil is enrolled, unless they are entitled to mother tongue tuition because a parent is an entitled European Commission employee (Category 1), or the pupil has a Category 2 contract.
- For more information about this please contact the school.
- The Language 1 is compulsory throughout the secondary cycle and is taken as one of the subjects in the European Baccalaureate.

Language 2

- The Language 2 is one of the working languages of the European Union (English, French or German), and it has to be different to the Language 1.
- Normally this is begun at the age of 6 in the Primary cycle.
- For new pupils in the Secondary cycle it is sometimes difficult to integrate into the second language because they do not always have the experience of the second language at the level used in the school. Support lessons are available in this case.
- Many parents want their child to be in English as a second language, but it is worth considering other options because there could be many extra opportunities later on for the pupil with another language to offer since English will always be possible up to a high level in the school.
- From S3 pupils do Human Sciences, and from S4 History and Geography, in the second language and these subjects are compulsory up to the Baccalaureate.
- For pupils who want to go into Dutch in more depth it is possible to choose Dutch as a second language in S6 and S7.

Language 3 and 4

- The Language 3 is chosen as a beginners course in S1, and it is compulsory until the end of S5.
- Pupils currently have a choice between German, English, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish.
- Subject to group sizes in S6 and S7 and demand, these groups can continue to the European Baccalaureate.
- Language 4 is an option in S4 for beginners, and it can be continued on to the European Baccalaureate.
- Depending on the level of the pupil it is possible to upgrade or downgrade the L3 and L4 to find a flexible solution for the options package.

Latin

- Latin can be chosen in S2 as an option, and it is available throughout the school.
- At the end of S5, those pupils do a special examination called the “Latinum Europaeum” which is particularly interesting for applicants to universities in some European countries.

Information Technology (ICT)

- The school is well equipped for ICT, and every classroom has at least one computer as well as a beamer/projector, and most rooms have smartboards which are used extensively by teachers.
- There are two fully equipped computer rooms, and a smaller room which is also used for distance learning.
- There are also computers available for pupils to use in the library and study hall.
- The wireless network is fast and efficient, and it is possible to log on throughout the school.
- ICT is embedded into all areas of the curriculum and pupil management, and teachers are innovative in their use of ICT in the classroom.
- Pupils are taught ICT as a subject in S1 and S2, and it is offered as an option in S3 and in the years above.

Educational Support

- There are some hours available to provide support for pupils who need to integrate into languages, or have problems with subjects such as Mathematics.
- These lessons are normally organised in small groups and take place outside the main timetable time.
- The three types of support available are known as **General, Moderate and Intensive Support**.
- The school follows all the policies and procedures of the European Schools.

Library and Media Centre

- In the secondary cycle there is a well-equipped library and media centre which is staffed by a full-time librarian.
- There is a good range of books which can be used and loaned in a variety of languages.
- There are also films and DVDs which can be watched, and there are computers available for use.
- Many pupils use the library, and it is an important working and social space in a central position in the school.

Assessment and European Baccalaureate examinations

- Assessment of pupils is ongoing and is a combination of formative and summative assessment.
- As the pupil moves through the school the assessment procedure becomes more rigorous, and from S4 the pupils are given two kinds of marks - one for class work and one for short tests or examinations (known as A and B marks).
- During S6 and S7 the focus is on preparing the pupils for the final Baccalaureate examination, and the final marks are made up of 50% internal class work, tests and examinations, and 50% for 5 external written and 3 oral examinations.

Higher education and careers guidance

- Applying for the right courses is a complex task, and we have a careers guidance team across the language sections which can provide help, support and references for applications to universities and colleges.
- Nearly all of our pupils go on to higher education and the European Schools have good contacts in universities across Europe where our pupils are highly regarded for their broad, as well as deep, education and their language skills. Lower down the school the careers advisers help with option choices, and also run a two-week work experience programme for pupils in the S5 class.

Residential trips and day visits

- There are a number of residential trips which take place on a regular basis which either focus on a particular subject, or are multi-disciplinary.

Currently the regular residential trips organised are:

S2	Trip to the island of Texel. Multi-disciplinary, with cycling to and from the island.	Every year
S4	Language 2 trips to England, France and Germany	Every year
S4/5	Latin trip to Rome	Every 1/2 years
S6	Adventure trip to the Ardennes. Multi-disciplinary.	Every year
S6/7	Ski trip for the Advanced Sports classes	Every 2 years

- There are also other shorter residential trips which are arranged for particular themes. During the year teachers organise a range of day trips, most of which are related to the curriculum, but some of which are social.

Events and Projects

- The school is very much involved in all the activities organised by the European Schools. They provide opportunities for our pupils to participate in larger events organised across the European Union.

Currently our pupils are involved in:

MEC	Model European Council	Every 1/2 years. In different European Schools.
MUNOM	Model United Nations	Every year, Munich
ESSS	European Schools Science Symposium	Every year. In different European Schools.
EUROSPORT	Team of 30 pupils in different sports.	Every 2 years In different European Schools.

During the school year there are also other events and projects within the school and in the local community.

Examples of these are:

Languages	Francophonie European Day of Languages National Days	Show for all French pupils European celebration Recognition of National Days
Mathematics and Sciences	Kangaroo for Mathematics Science Projects	International Maths event A project day for younger pupils
Humanities/Human Sciences	Schumann Day	Celebration of Europe
Sports	Eurosport preparation Advanced sports offered	Ongoing throughout the year
Music and Drama	Musical, plays, concerts and evening of music	Range of events which take place throughout the year
Art	Various art projects around the school	Ongoing throughout the year, and collaboration with the community
Charity work	Act2Aid	School charity work done by pupils in and outside the school community

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Other than the normal school events, musicals, plays, competitions and other activities organised in the school, including the programme of educational trips and visits.
- The Parents Association offers some Extra-Curricular Activities for secondary pupils, and every year there is a list of activities published which range from ICT to sporting activities.

Pupil participation

- Pupils are encouraged to take a full and active part in all aspects of life in school.
- Every class has a pupil representative, and the pupils' committee has an election for President and Vice-President at the beginning of every school year.
- They have a special opportunity to participate in the strategic planning and management of the school and they participate in a range of meetings such as the School Administrative Board, the School Advisory Council and the Secondary Education Council.
- In such meetings they are able to represent the views of the pupils, and they also participate in the system-wide group called Cosup which normally meets in Brussels or Luxembourg.
- The pupil committee also arranges social events for the pupils.

Frequently asked questions

What are European Schools?

- European Schools were set up for the families of employees of the institutions of the European Union
- Other local and international families may join if there are spaces available.
- Fourteen of these Type 1 schools are in different locations in Europe.

Where are there other European Schools?

- There are currently around 25,000 pupils who have a European School education in the Type 1 European Schools in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, the U.K., and the Netherlands.
- There are also some new European Schools which are organised as Accredited European Schools in France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Estonia, Finland, The Netherlands, Denmark and Italy, and there are more due to open in the coming years.
- An additional 10,000 pupils attend these schools.

What is the difference between the European School Bergen and the European School in The Hague?

- Bergen is one of the original 14 European Schools and it is funded directly by the European Commission and the member states which send teachers to the school.
- The school in The Hague is an accredited school in a Dutch school group which provides European schooling of the same type as provided in the European Schools.

What is the difference between a European School and an International School?

- In an international school there is one working language, with other languages taught as foreign languages.
- In a European School the curriculum is delivered in different languages and it can meet the needs of children from many different backgrounds.

How are we “Europe in a school”?

- Being “European” is celebrated in many ways, and with the different languages and cultures within the school it is easy to see that we have really is a small-scale version of the European Union.
- In Bergen we teach at present 17 official languages of the EU.

What are Category 1, 2 and 3 pupils?

Category I: Pupils who have to be admitted to the European Schools. These pupils are exempt from school fees.

Category II: Pupils covered by individual agreements or decisions, each entailing specific rights and obligations for the pupils concerned, particularly as regards school fees.

Category III: Pupils who do not belong to categories I and II. These pupils would be admitted to the European Schools in so far as places are available.. The ordinary school fees fixed by the Board of Governors would be payable for these pupils.

How competitive are the fees?

- Our annual school fees range from around 3.500-6.600 euros.
- Even with bus transport from Amsterdam this is still cheaper than many other international schools.

Are there fee reductions and scholarships?

- Yes. For larger families there are fee reductions of 20% for the second child, and 40% for subsequent children.
- For French passport holders there is also support available through the “Bourses Scolaires” support programme.
- Further information is available from the school.

Are there places available, or are there waiting lists?

- There are places available in all sections and at all levels, and we have a large building with many facilities.
- There are currently no waiting lists.

How big are the classes, and how many pupils are there?

- Many classes are below 20, and the maximum class size is 30.
- There are many small groups with some pupils receiving individual tuition in some Language 1 courses.

- There are approximately 560 pupils in the school, with about 40% in the Dutch, 40% in the English, and 20% in the French sections.

How long is the school day?

- The official school day is from 09:00-16:30 from Monday to Friday.
- The younger pupils have shorter days (until 13:10) on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday depending on the group they are in.
- See the information in the different parts of the school.

Are there school buses?

- There are various organised transport services.
- The school can also be reached by public transport.

Are there child-care services?

- It is possible for parents to enrol their children in the child-care service before and after school which is arranged by AllesKits.

Are there Open Days?

- There are different times when the school has events which can be attended by potential parents.
- As many of our new parents come from abroad we have found it better to make every day a possible "Open Day".
- In this way parents can make an appointment to visit the school when it is convenient, ask questions, and see the school operating normally.

How easy is it for parents to meet the teachers?

- Parents can make an appointment to meet teachers if they have concerns, and each teacher is available at a specific time each week in the Secondary cycle.
- Parents have the chance to see the teachers at the Parents Evenings in November and February and on other occasions throughout the year depending on the class and level.
- There are also introduction meetings at the start of the school year in different parts of the school.

Are parents able to monitor the progress of their children easily?

- Depending on the age and level of the pupil the communication with the teachers can range from meetings and emails to digital monitoring.
- There are systems in place for homework and attendance monitoring by parents in the secondary cycle.

How do parents know which books to buy?

- Information is provided for new parents so that they know which books are required for the class.
- In the secondary cycle a booklist is published on the website.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to order and buy the books.

What is the policy of the school regarding homework?

- From Primary 1 there is some homework to involve parents in the learning process, and to give the children more opportunities for independent learning.
- It increases during the primary cycle, from a starting point of a maximum of 15 minutes per day up to a maximum of 45 minutes for the P5 pupils.
- There is a homework policy in both the primary and secondary cycles.
- In the secondary cycle the amount of homework gradually increases and is intended to support the learning.
- Parents are able to check the homework given digitally.

What is the European Baccalaureate, and what is the pass rate?

- The EB is the leaving qualification of the European Schools, officially recognised by the member-states of the EU, and it comes at the end of a two year programme which allows pupils to enter higher education.
- As it is a two year programme pupils cannot join the school just for the final year unless they are transferring from another European School where they have passed S6.
- The pass rate in the EB is between 95-100%, and if a pupil fails they usually repeat the year and are successful.
- The final Baccalaureate result is made up of 50% internal work and exams; the other 50% is made up of 5 written and 3 oral examinations.

What is the difference between the European Bacculaureate and the International Bacculaureate?

- The EB is a qualification unique to the European Schools and it offers the examinations in different languages.
- There are similarities with the IB, but the IB is a qualification much more focused around subjects taught in the English language and it does not offer the same variety of mother tongue tuition or subjects taught in other EU languages.
- The EB is monitored by the national inspectors for the European Schools, and so it is a genuine European Union qualification.

How well recognised is the European Bacculaureate and the ES curriculum?

- The EB and our curriculum are recognised throughout the European Union as equivalent to the national system, and this makes it easy for pupils to transfer in and out at any stage of their education.
- The EB is a well recognised qualification which leads to entry to top universities in Europe and around the world.
- The EB is monitored by the national inspectors for the European Schools.

Where do school leavers go after their time with us?

- Most of our graduates go on to higher education - many of them to the U.K. where a lot of them succeed in getting places at top universities.
- A number also go to Dutch universities.
- Some return to the universities in their home countries, and others are successful in getting places in the USA and other countries.

Are the pupils at a disadvantage if they return to the national education system?

- Our pupils are able to return to the national system at the right level, and this is guaranteed by our official table of equivalences.
- Our pupils leave with the skills required for the national systems, but they also have a high level of languages.

What happens to pupils who are not able to take the Bacculaureate? Is there an alternative qualification?

- There is no alternative qualification.
- If they do fail they can repeat the Bacculaureate.
- By the time a pupil reaches our S5, the year when options for the Bacculaureate are chosen, it is clear whether or not he/she has the ability to go on and succeed in the European Bacculaureate.
- If a pupil is clearly unable to proceed we will advise them to find an alternative post-16 education.
- In practice it is unusual for a pupil to fail the Bacculaureate because of this strategy.

What happens if a pupil fails the year?

- Occasionally a pupil does not meet the standard required for promotion to the year above and will be required to repeat the year following the deliberation of the Class Council (all the teachers for the class).
- Normally a pupil can only repeat a year once, and if the pupil continues to have difficulties it is clear that an alternative needs to be found.
- In the first year of admission languages are not considered for the promotion, and so, for example, if a pupil is having difficulties with the second language in the first year at the school this can be exempted, including any other subjects taken in the second language.

What age groups are admitted?

- Pupils begin in the nursery cycle from the age of 4, join the primary cycle from 6 and the secondary at 11.
- Pupils do the final Bacculaureate exams at the age of 18-19.
- Younger children can join the creche for 2-4 year olds called "Little Europe".

What kinds of pupils go to European Schools?

- Pupils come from all over Europe, and all over the world.
- There are currently around 50 nationalities at the school.
- Their parents may work at the Joint Research Centre in Petten; or they may come from all other possible Dutch or international backgrounds.
- For French speakers it is one of the few possibilities for an education in French in the Netherlands.

How old does a child have to be before he/she starts in the nursery class?

- A child has to be at least 4 years old before 31 December in the year when he/she starts in September.
- We are not allowed to enrol children outside this.
- If they are under 4 they can join the creche, Little Europe.

Can Dutch pupils join?

- The school is open for Dutch pupils and about 40% of our pupils have Dutch nationality.
- They may be Dutch pupils who grew up abroad, or have one Dutch parent, or they come from local Dutch families in the area. Dutch parents must apply for permission from the Ministry of Education to join the school, and if the pupil is able to show that they have the ability to succeed in the system they may be accepted.
- For Dutch pupils the school is the equivalent of VWO.

Are there many different nationalities in each class?

- In the French and Dutch sections most of the pupils are native speakers.
- In the English section some of the pupils have other mother tongues, but because they study for most of the day in English the language level is very high.

Where do the pupils at our school live, and how do they get to us?

- Around 50% of our pupils live in the Bergen and Alkmaar areas.
- Others live further away in villages and towns in the region, and about 20% travel from the Amsterdam area.
- Many of the local pupils come by bicycle.
- There are minibus and taxi services for pupils who come from further away.
- The school is also accessible by public transport.

How long do our pupils stay with us?

- Some stay for the whole of their education, some stay for several years depending on the work and contracts of parents.
- New pupils settle into our school quickly and are welcomed by their peers.
- We have found that some pupils who have been here for only short periods of time, or an exchange with another school, develop friendships which are lasting.

Is it possible for a pupil to change a language, or a section, after they have enrolled?

- The decision rests with the director.
- In practice changes can and do happen, but they need to be for valid educational reasons.
- Our first principle is that we have to put the interests of the pupil first.
- This means that if we feel that the pupil would benefit from a change of language or section we will do what we can at any stage to make things work and we will listen to the views of the parents, pupil and teachers.

Are there extra lessons available for pupils who need help or support?

- There are opportunities for pupils who need extra help, or who are new to the school and do not have all the language skills required.
- Identification of pupils is at the start of the year.
- Pupils with more intensive support needs have a different procedure.
- For all information on extra lessons see the section on Educational Support.
- In extreme cases a pupil on intensive support can have a modified curriculum, but in this case he/she will not be able to proceed to the European Baccalaureate.

Can pupils join at any time during the school year?

- We will do everything we can to integrate new pupils, and as many of our families are very mobile we can be flexible with starting and leaving points.

How important are languages in a European School?

- They are very important, and from the beginning of the Primary cycle the second language (L2) is introduced.
- Later on in the Secondary cycle subjects such as History and Geography are taught in the second language.
- Also at the beginning of the Secondary cycle pupils begin with a third language (L3), and later have the chance to choose a fourth language (L4) and Latin subject to numbers and availability.

- Inside the school there is a fee-paying language school called Alingua , and pupils (and parents) who wish to further develop their language skills in one language or learn a new one.

What is a “language section”, and how do the language sections work?

- When the pupils come to the school they are enrolled in one of the language sections, or streams - we have English, Dutch and French speaking sections.
- The pupil does most of the work in this section and for most of the pupils the language of the section becomes their Language 1 (L1) unless they have a L1 which is not the language of a section (for example a pupil has L1 Polish and L2 English, and is in the English section).
- The pupil goes into other groups for the second language subjects and other subjects such as “European Hours” and Music, Art and Sport, depending on the age and level.
- The idea is that they follow the same curriculum but in a different language.
- For the youngest pupils who go into the Little Europe creche, there is one class and no language section so that the children are exposed to a range of languages from an early age.

What languages are available as Language 2?

- The languages offered as Language 2 are the three working languages of the European Union: French, German or English.
- Pupils have to do a second language which is different from their Language 1.
- Dutch can be studied as Language 2 in S6 and S7 for the European Baccalaureate.

Do pupils have opportunities to learn Dutch at the school if they are not in the Dutch section?

- In the Primary cycle they are exposed to the Dutch language through European Hours, and in the general working of the school.
- In S1 they can choose Dutch as L3, and in S4 Dutch is offered as L4.
- In the Baccalaureate years they can also do Dutch as L2.
- If these options do not fit into the package taken by the pupil then another alternative is to take private or group lessons with Alingua.

What is the standard of Language 2?

- The most popular Language 2 is English, and the standard is very high.
- In French and German it sometimes depends on the previous knowledge of pupils, but all will have to reach a very high level by the time they take the final examinations.
- It is expected that the pupils reach C1 and C2 levels by the time they leave the school.

How important are Maths and the Sciences?

- Mathematics is taught to a high level, and with our focus on sciences as a result of our connections with the Research Centre in Petten the sciences are very popular at the school.
- For the Baccalaureate all three sciences are very popular options.
- Mathematics is a compulsory subject to the end of the Baccalaureate, and the pupils have to do at least one science until they leave school.

What are the opportunities in the Arts, Sports and Extra-Curricular Activities?

- For pupils with interests in sports, the arts and music there are also many opportunities with good facilities and a range of sports and other activities on offer.
- There are musicals and plays which are staged in the school; the pupils participate in interesting projects relating to Art and Design both in and out of the school; and sports are well catered for with possibilities for a course in Advanced Sport in the last two years.
- There is an annual outdoor sports residential week in the summer, participation in the Europe-wide Eurosport competition with the other European Schools, and a ski trip every two years.
- The Parents Association offers a wide range of Extra-Curricular Activities for mainly the primary pupils, and every year there is a list of activities published which range from ICT to sporting activities.

Can pupils learn musical instruments?

- During music lessons pupils are exposed to a range of different instruments.
- Although the majority of pupils have music lessons outside school, partly because of where they live, there are also some opportunities to learn an instrument through the Extra-Curricular Programme organised by the parents.

Does the school organise educational trips and visits?

- There are many day trips to places of educational interest in a wide range of areas.
- Sometimes they take place in the local area and are done on foot, but there are also many trips to museums in Amsterdam, visits to plays and concerts as well as work together with pupils from other schools.
- One popular trip organised by the German teachers is the annual visit to a Christmas Market in German; and another the Greenlight for Girls trip in Belgium (science education for girls).
- The location of the school makes it easy to organise a varied and interesting range of day visits.
- There are also residential trips both in The Netherlands and abroad, and the school participates in all the international events in languages, sciences and sports organised by the European Schools as well as important international events such as the Model United Nations.
- Such events bring our pupils into contact with pupils from all over Europe.
- For further details go to the pages in the Nursery and Primary and Secondary cycles.

How often do pupils receive a report?

- The year is divided into two semesters, and there is an official school report at the end of each semester.
- There are also interim reports at other times of the year depending on the level and class.

What kinds of teachers work here?

- Our teachers are fully-qualified to teach in their own countries.
- Most of our teachers are native speakers in their subjects, and this is certainly the case for all Language 1 groups.
- They are either recruited and sent by the member states or employed locally.
- Therefore we have a very European group of teachers, and this gives the pupils the opportunity to study for most of their time with native speakers.

Where do our teachers come from?

- Our teachers come from all parts of Europe.
- Our mother tongue teachers are all native speakers, and as we have 17 mother tongues in the school this brings about a great deal of diversity.

What is the role of the EU member states and the national inspectors?

- The EU delegations have national inspectors who are responsible for the European Schools, and they are very involved with the monitoring of the system, the development of educational programmes, the inspection of the school, and the observation and evaluation of teachers.
- Therefore we regularly have inspectors from all over Europe in the school, and other representatives from the member states and the European Commission who are involved in the governance of the school and the system.
- Such a structure is unique to the European Schools and provides a level of quality assurance which is truly international.

Updated July 8th 2016.