

Newsletter May/June 2026

Dear parents and caregivers,

This year, citizenship education is on our agenda. Behind the scenes, we are working hard to create a wonderful program for the children where, on one hand, there is recognition, but also plenty of room for what is still unknown.

On Wednesday, March 25th, we celebrated Eid al-Fitr together for the first time. For a few weeks, a decorated table with information about Ramadan, put together by the parents of the citizenship committee, had been in the hallway downstairs. On the morning of March 25th, this committee entered the office early with large quantities of food. Together, we got to work to make it a festive occasion. While the children feasted on all the delicious snacks, they simultaneously learned a great deal about the background and meaning of this celebration.

For one group of children, it was a celebration of recognition. We saw shining eyes and enormous pride when they were able to tell their classmates about their own faith and the traditions they know from home. Sharing these stories created mutual understanding and a wonderful atmosphere in the classrooms.

Later in the week, another student spontaneously stopped by with apples. It had been Iranian New Year (Nowruz), and she wanted to share something about it because it was her culture. This way, we learn even more from each other!

Of course, this celebration could not have been such a success without the efforts of our involved community. A big thank you to the citizenship committee consisting of parents and the citizenship committee consisting of teachers. Thanks to your hard work and the delicious snacks, we look back on a very successful and educational celebration and are already looking forward to the celebration of Ketu Koti.

Best regards, **Mieke Nees** Director



IMPORTANT DATES

- **11-05:** Start of Cito tests group 3 to 7
- **14-05:** Ascension Day, children off
- **15-05:** Study day team, children off
- **20-05:** Information morning for new parents (NL)
- **21-05:** Information morning for new parents (EN)
- **23-05 to 25-05:** Pentecost holiday, children off
- **27-05:** Charity market
- **29-05:** Middle school field trip
- **05-06:** Lower school field trip
- **12-06:** Half study day, children off from 12:00 PM
- **15-06 to 18-06:** Evening 4-day walk (Avond4daagse)
- **19-06:** Participants of the Avond4daagse may start at 09:45 AM
- **24-06:** Farewell musical Group 8
- **26-06:** Farewell musical Group 8

- **01-07:** Picnic and Keti Koti
- **03-07:** Study day team, children off and start of summer vacation
- **03-07 to 16-08:** Summer vacation
- **17-08:** First day of school

NEW STUDENTS

In the past period, the following students have started or will start: Said, Nina, Fridanna, Imran, Noah, Oumayra, Elena, David, Zoë, Aïcha, D'sire, Eva, Irana, Oleksandra, Wesley, Evan, Zoey, Eliam, Emilia, Ilja, Ada, Julia, Jazz-Maé, Max, Lukas, Aevi, and Alayna. We wish all children a lot of fun at our school.

STAFF NEWS

Floor Bakers (teacher of group 678B) has indicated she would like to take unpaid leave. She will not be at school between the May break and the summer vacation. Sjeng Kwee, who has been working at our school for a longer period, will replace Floor. We wish Sjeng and the class a lot of fun in this final busy but pleasant period!

GROUP 8 FAREWELL

In a few weeks, we will be waving goodbye to Group 8 as they head off to secondary schools. This year, we are saying goodbye to 71 Group 8 students. They will perform their musical on Wednesday, June 24th, and Friday, June 26th. We say goodbye to: Eli, Ali, Kwabena, Deniël, Roos, Aliza, Sebbe, Luuk, Maeve, Isa, Shamairo, Safouan, Yousef, Suren, Liam, Josephine, Sarah, Davis, Aarav, Kingson, Zayed, Eddi, Briënne, Mette, Felina, Ethan, Mert, Nana, Yousef, Liam, Hayley, Midas, Taco, Feline, Emily, Vesper, Matthijs, Lola, Jesse, Safouan, Luca, Zoë, Ivany, Dishara, Laurie, Thiago, Kaï, Pepijn, Eva, Mia, Daouya, Minne, Ezra, Juul, Aimee, Julie, Thomas, Willem, Nisa, Sura, Lisa, Jeldou, Ella, Adam, Julia, Uzay, Esme, Stella, Jack, and Vince!

DENIM DOCTORS

In the past month, the upper school had the "Denim Doctors" project. Together with art teacher Fransesca Vonck and fashion

journalist Natasje Admiraal, the students discussed sustainable and social aspects surrounding fashion. Then the Denim Doctors started at the beginning: the fabric. The children conducted tissue research using tweezers and old denim. What happens when you dissect a pair of jeans to its essence? How many samples in different blue shades can you collect? From even the smallest scraps of denim, they eventually created a wearable work of art.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP ROUTE

What does a synagogue look like from the inside? What happens in a mosque? And what symbols do you encounter in a church? To find out, you visit all three. In the Portuguese Synagogue, the Fatih Mosque, and "Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder," you go looking for similarities and differences between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The upper school completed this route and was able to speak with various representatives about similarities and differences between the different faiths. What is the difference between the Bible and the Torah? And why are there different calendars? A very educational day!

DANCE WITH THE RED CARPET

The middle school learned a dance in four lessons under the guidance of dance teacher Oxana. Oxana aligned the dance with the theme of "Blink Reading" in class: Discoverers and Inventors. The children went on an exploratory journey through different movements: from fluid to robot-like, from slow to fast, from small to large. This resulted in a beautiful dance performance by each class for the parents, after which the parents themselves were pulled onto the dance floor for a moment.

LOOKING BACK AT EID AL-FITR

On Wednesday, March 25th, we celebrated Eid al-Fitr together. Several parents helped with the shopping and handing out the platters. They also shared information about Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. The children were very positive about the food on the platters. There was even olive oil from a private garden in Morocco! We

look back on a very successful morning. The next event the citizenship committee is working on is Keti Koti. We are busy with the preparations for this celebration. If you would also like to think along with us, please email directie@obssteigereiland.nl to sign up.

COOKING COMPETITION

On Wednesday, May 20th, in collaboration with Dynamo, we are organizing a cooking competition for the children of the upper school and their parents. At this moment, we still have spots available! You and your child arrive here at 2:00 PM and start cooking one of the recipes immediately. The jury (consisting of teachers from our school) will taste, and the best cooks will advance to round 2, the final. Who will become the best cooking duo of our school?

SPORTS DAYS

On Wednesday, April 15th, and Friday, April 17th, we organized sports days for the lower, middle, and upper schools. These are days we cannot organize without the help of parents. A huge thank you to the parents who came to help! They were once again successful and sporty days.

STUDY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Next year, we have these study days:

- Thursday, October 8
- Friday, October 9
- Friday, December 4 (from 12:30 PM, children off due to Sinterklaas celebration)
- Friday, December 18
- Monday, March 1
- Thursday, March 25
- Friday, March 26
- Tuesday, May 18
- Friday, June 18
- Friday, July 9

And these holidays:

- Oct 10 - Oct 18: Autumn break
- Dec 19 - Jan 3: Christmas break
- Feb 20 - Feb 28: Spring break

- Apr 24 - May 9: May break
- Jul 10 - Aug 22: Summer vacation

COMPULSORY EDUCATION (LEERPLICHT)

If a child is reported sick before or after a holiday, we are required to report this to the compulsory education office. They will then visit to check if your child is actually at home. This procedure is also followed in the case of a rejected leave request.

LATE ARRIVAL

Could you please ensure that the children are in class by 8:45 AM at the latest? It is pleasant for the class if there are no children walking in and out after that time, and it is also better for your child to be present at the start of the day.

REPORTING ILLNESS

If your child is not coming to school due to illness or a doctor's visit, please inform us before 9:00 AM. This can be done by phone, email (ziekenboeg@obssteigereiland.nl), or via the app. This is the fastest way for us to be informed.

SMARTPHONES

As you may have heard, there is a national movement called "Growing Up Smartphone Free" (Smartphone Vrij Opgroeien). The desire to delay getting a smartphone as long as possible is also present among parents at our school. When children first received smartphones ten years ago, there was no research on the impact. Now there is. Exposing children to things their brains cannot yet sufficiently process can cause a range of problems—from nearsightedness to concentration and sleep problems, mental health issues, eating disorders, and opening the door to cyberbullying, grooming, and transgressive behavior.

With this message, we want to let you know that there is contact between some parents and the school board to think about this subject together and create appropriate policy. If you want to know more about this topic, take a look at:

<https://smartphonevrijopgroeien.nl/het-probleem/>

You can subscribe to the newsletter via the website to stay informed of the latest news; you will also find tips on gradually introducing a phone, how to set a good example yourself, etc. This can be found under:

<https://smartphonevrijopgroeien.nl/kijktips/#kijktipsmetkind>

Furthermore, it is now being discussed at school in the MR (Participation Council). If you would like to indicate your standpoint on this, you can email directie@obssteigereiland.nl or pass it on to one of the participating parents in the MR.

FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Amsterdam children aged 4 to 11 travel for free in our city on all GVB buses, trams, and metros between 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM. This promotion is valid until January 3, 2027. Apply for "GVB Kids Vrij" quickly if you haven't done so yet. Below you can read how it works.

1. How does GVB Kids Vrij work?

Children aged 4 to 11 from Amsterdam (including Weesp) travel for free on all GVB buses, trams, and metros between 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM.

Outside these times, your child travels using their own balance with a 34 percent discount. Children must always travel accompanied by an adult. The promotion is valid until January 3, 2027.

2. What do you need to apply? You can apply for Kids Vrij in two ways:

- **Online via DigiD.** You will need:
 - Your child's personal OV-chipkaart.
 - Your child's personal DigiD.

3. At the service desk of the City

Office (Stadsloket). For parents or caregivers who cannot or do not want to use DigiD. Bring:

- Your child's personal OV-chipkaart.

- Your child's passport or ID card (if they have one). If your child does not have an ID, the municipality will check the date of birth in the Personal Records Database (BRP).

4. Need help applying? The City of Amsterdam is happy to help. You can call the municipality via 14 020 or visit the City Office. You can also get help from the Neighborhood Team (Buurtteam) in your area.

SUMMERCAMP

Summer Camp Amstelveen & Amsterdam is the educational and, above all, fun week during the summer holidays where the development of English is central. This happens through varied activities to keep it fun:

- Songs & Conversations
- Arts & Crafts
- Sport & Dance
- English Class (The only part that looks a bit like school).

In between all parts, there is always time to play outside. Summer Camp is for all children from Group 1 to Group 7.

Locations & Dates:

- **OBS De Dapper:** Nieuwlandstr. 3, 1093 XG Amsterdam
 - Dates: Monday July 6 - Friday July 10
- **Michiel de Ruyter:** Laan Rozenburg 6, 1181ER Amstelveen
 - Dates: Monday July 6 - Friday July 10
- **School of Understanding:** Pandora 4A, 1183KK Amstelveen
 - Dates: Monday July 13 - Friday July 17 & Monday August 10 - Wednesday August 12

Times:

- 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

- *Pre and After care are optional: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

JUNIOR CAMP

For children currently in Group 7 and 8, there is Junior Camp. The extra challenge in English and preparation for secondary education. Junior Camp is a 5-day summer camp at Landgoed Rhijnauwen in Bunnik.

- 20 hours of English lessons: Vocabulary, grammar, communication, and presentation.
- Active and creative afternoon program, also entirely in English.

For information & registration:

www.summertime.nl See you at Summer Camp or Junior Camp! **Mr Marc** (Engels voor Bengels)

The next newsletter will appear after the summer holidays in August.