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Preface

Amsteltaal is the newcomers' school of Amstelveen, the foundation for public education in Amstelveen, Ouderkerk aan de Amstel and Nes aan de Amstel. Amsteltaal has two locations: Amsteltaal-Noord and Amsteltaal-Zuid.

In this guide, we explain what the Amsteltaal team considers important when teaching children who speak little or no Dutch. In addition to all kinds of practical matters, you can read about the curriculum, how pupil care is organised and exactly how the transfer procedure works.

This school guide is primarily intended for the parents and carers of our pupils, but also for interns and teachers in primary education and other interested parties. Would you like to know more about Amsteltaal? Please visit our website: www.amsteltaal.nl or drop by. You are most welcome!

Team Amsteltaal

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1. The newcomer groups

Amsteltaal started with one group in August 2014. Amsteltaal currently has 12 groups: Amsteltaal-Noord has four groups and Amsteltaal-Zuid has eight groups. Where possible, pupils are assigned to the location closest to their home address. Some children can walk or cycle to school, but others have to travel by car or take the underground or bus. The groups are organised as follows:

Amsteltaal-Noord:

- one group 3/4 (Geel), for pupils aged 6 to 8
- one group 5 (Paars), for pupils aged 8 and 9
- one group 6/7 (Groen), for pupils aged 9 and 10
- one group 7/8 (Roze), for pupils aged 10 to 12

Amsteltaal-Zuid:

- one lower school, group 1/2 (the Rode Tulpen) for pupils aged 4 to 6;
- four middle school groups (the Witte, Groene, Oranje and Turquoise Tulpen) for pupils aged 6 to 9;
- three upper school groups (the Lila, Gele and Blauwe Tulpen) for pupils aged 9 to 12.

Almost all subjects are differentiated and from group 4 onwards, we work across groups. We aim for a maximum of 16 students per group.

Amsteltaal offers education five days a week from 8:45 am -14:15 pm. A continuous schedule is used.

The Dutch school system can be different from what parents and children are used to from their home countries. In the Netherlands, we have compulsory education from the age of 5 (until 16), but almost all children in the Netherlands attend school from the age of 4. The Dutch education system has different types of schools, based on religion or pedagogical beliefs. In general, manners in the Netherlands are quite informal, an independent (work) attitude is valued and children are encouraged to express their opinions, in a pleasant manner. Much attention is paid to social-emotional development because it is seen as the most important condition for learning. Students who show great engagement and motivation also learn more and faster. We stimulate this through regular variety of work forms in our curriculum. It is also typically Dutch that formal learning mainly takes place during school hours. After school, Dutch children are used to playing, playing sports or relaxing in other ways.





The pupils

Students at Amsteltaal come from all over the world: out of an average of 180 students, we have over 30 nationalities. These students have very diverse educational backgrounds. A large proportion are children of highly educated parents and knowledge migrants. They are raised multilingual because of the languages spoken at home and/or because they attended an International School. This therefore means that for a portion of our students, Dutch is the second, third (or even fourth) language they learn.

However, we also have refugee children who, for various reasons have been denied or for a longer period of time little education, and children of migrant workers. The differences can be great; in our language policy plan we describe our student population even more specifically.



The team

In the 2025-2026 school year, the Amsteltaal team will consist of the following individuals:

Amsteltaal-Noord

Geel: Masja Pantlin and Agaath de Bruijn

Groen: Koen Fris

Paars: Nina van Mastwijk

Roze: Sander Doorenspleet

Teaching assistant: Monique ten Heggeler

Gym teacher: Marit

SEN coördinator: Daphne Engels

Management: Laura van der Hammen

Amsteltaal-Zuid

Rode Tulpen: Ankie Eekman and Jiska Noortman-Kroon

Witte Tulpen: Maartje Keulers and Agaath de Bruijn

Groene Tulpen: Rick Mertens

Oranje Tulpen: Rita Nawmie and Bianca Pleune-Duijzer

Turquoise Tulpen: Helma Tebbertman and Sonja Scholte

Lila Tulpen: Evelyn Visser and Angelique Bos-de Rooij

Gele Tulpen: Mirte Harms and Natasja Borgman

Blauwe Tulpen: Helen O'Brien and Bianca Pleune-Duijzer

Teacher support staff: Robert Palm, Monique van der Felz-Rempt, Safae el Faddali

Gymnastics: Bob Titulaer

Principal: Simone Rossing

SEN coördinator: Sanae Dahoui

Administration: Ira Elte



The teachers at Amsteltaal are all trained in the didactics of learning Dutch as a second language (NT2) by following a Post-HBO NT2 and/or by training in NT2 educational programs/methodologies such as Met Woorden in de Weer, LOGO 3000, Wereld vol Woorden or Zien Is Snappen. Annually the teachers visit regional and national study days of the Lowan for expansion of professional knowledge. They also participate in meetings of the Learning Network Newcomer Education of SWV Amstelronde. Amsteltaal offers internships to students Pedagogy, PABO and/or Master NT2 and students MBO educational assistant.

The board

Amstelwijs
Primair onderwijs met een plus!

Amsteltaal is part of the Amstelwijs Foundation.

This foundation includes eleven schools in Amstelveen, Ouderkerk aan de Amstel and Nes aan de Amstel.

Amsteltaal endorses the vision of public education of the Amstelwijs foundation. Everyone is welcome, regardless of belief, religion, political affiliation or origin. There is mutual respect for each other and for each other's philosophy of life or religion. We pay attention to the norms and values of Dutch society.







2. Inflow and transfer of students

Registration policy

Preschoolers

In Amstelveen, the policy is that newcomers aged 4/5 are immediately registered at a regular elementary school. The Central Information Desk (CIL) can advise and guide parents in this. The CIL can be reached at info@poamstelveen.nl or 06-82288072. The CIL also coordinates registration with language schools. For more information: www.cilamstelveen.nl.

If after some time it appears that a regular kindergarten class is not the right place for this newcomer, he or she can be registered with Amsteltaal. The specific educational needs of the child are examined and it is determined whether Amsteltaal's preschool class is the most appropriate place. The starting point is that after receiving extra support from Amsteltaal, the child should return to regular Dutch-speaking education, preferably the same school. Siblings of older children who are placed with Amsteltaal can, if there are sufficient places available, be registered directly for the preschool group.

Children 6 years and older

Newcomers aged 6 years or older should be registered with the Central Information Desk (CIL) of the Municipality of Amstelveen.

The criteria used for registration are:

- the child is 6 years of age or older and is 'ready for school', i.e. it meets the requirements to learn to read and write;
- the child lives in the municipality of Amstelveen, Ouderkerk or Nes a/d Amstel;
- the child speaks little or no Dutch;
- the child's parents intend to settle in the Netherlands for a longer period of time and want their child to attend regular Dutch-language primary education.

Some newcomers have already been exposed to the Dutch language, for example because one or both of their parents speak Dutch. Or because they have already taken Dutch lessons at the International School or another school (for example a class at an AZC). If there is any doubt as to whether Amsteltaal is the right place, a child is screened. This determines whether a child can be enrolled at Amsteltaal or whether regular education is a better fit.

The CIL offers parents help and information regarding placement at a (language) school. CIL staff can also answer parents' questions, for example about the Dutch education system and the procedure in Amstelveen. Transition to regular education, after a period at the language school, is also coordinated through CIL.



The registration and intake

After registering via the CIL, parents receive a welcome email from Amsteltaal. This email contains an information letter (available in the five most commonly spoken languages) and an invitation to an introductory meeting and an intake interview. Parents of prospective pupils fill in a detailed questionnaire when registering. This information gives Amsteltaal teachers a good idea of, among other things, the child's educational history, the languages spoken at home, the child's environment, talents and other special characteristics. Parents and children are invited to a tour and information meeting. This meeting provides a lot of practical and substantive information about the school, but also about after-school care, Dutch lessons for parents and the transition after Amsteltaal, for example. All parents receive an information folder with written information about all these topics. In addition to the parent meeting, the teacher conducts an intake interview based on the information provided on the registration form. The teachers do this themselves, so that they can immediately establish initial contact with the parents and get a good picture of the child in order to determine which starting tests are necessary (for middle and upper grades) and to start the Individual Development Plan (IOP).

The initial situation

At intake at Amsteltaal, it is never entirely clear exactly what a student's educational needs are. Our students have diverse educational backgrounds. They come from all kinds of schools with different types of education and some students have little or no school experience.

Therefore, we try to get a picture of what each student needs within a short period of time and respond accordingly. Our education is largely tailored to the individual needs of the student.

For technical reading, we listen to whether the children already know the Dutch sounds and can make the sound-sign connection. Mathematics is tested with the Bareka at the start; this is a non-language math test, with which we can get a good picture of the technical level of mathematics.

Based on this we divide the students into instructional groups. These instruction groups are adjusted very regularly in order to provide customized education as much as possible.

The transfer to regular Dutch education

Transfer procedure

After an average of 39 weeks of education, our pupils move on to a Dutch-speaking (primary) school. Pupils move on to all schools within Amstelveen, Ouderkerk and Nes aan de Amstel. We also cooperate with a number of schools in neighboring municipalities. To ensure that all children have an equal chance of a place at a school close to home, we work with a strict procedure and the transfer is supervised by the CIL. It can also happen that families move (sometimes back to the country of origin) and go elsewhere to find a school.



Should a family move outside the municipality of Amstelveen, Ouderkerk aan de Amstel/ Nes aan de Amstel, CIL cannot support the search for a school. In recent years several pupils have also left for Special Primary Education (SBO) or Special Education (SO), because these pupils need long-term intensive support, broader than just support in learning the Dutch language.

Below we explain the procedure in outline

After 26 weeks at Amsteltaal, advice will be given on the recommended school year for your child and a transfer date to a primary school will be proposed. Depending on your child's age and development, testing may be part of this process.

Once the advice is ready, you will receive an email from the Central Information Desk (CIL). This email will contain the provisional recommendation and a list of up to three primary schools in the neighbourhood with available places. You must inform the CIL of your order of preference for these schools within the specified period. When responding, please indicate whether a sibling already attends a primary school in Amstelveen or Ouderkerk aan de Amstel. After the deadline, your child will, if possible, be assigned to the school that is highest on your list. Children with brothers or sisters who already attend a school will be given priority, but placement is not guaranteed. If more children apply than a school can accommodate, placement will be based on proximity to the school. If no preferences have been specified, your child will be assigned to a school that still has places available.

Once a school has been assigned, you will receive a confirmation email from the CIL. The assigned primary school will then contact you to arrange an introductory meeting and finalise the enrolment details.

Transition to regular groups in elementary school

In principle, the offer in the newcomer groups is based on 39 weeks of education. There are students who can leave sooner and students who receive an extension, for example because they have not reached the final goals. Before a student leaves our school, we contact the SEN Coordinator of the receiving school to ensure a good transfer. The receiving school receives the student's IOP and advice for further offerings. We actively encourage a warm transfer with the future teacher; this can also - in consultation with the receiving school - take place by telephone. After transition, our Ambulatory Language Support Officer (ATO) will supervise the transition and, if necessary, support the school intensively.

Especially for vocabulary, the student needs extra supply in the new class. It is known that growing into Dutch education requires at least five years of attention (Ruimte voor nieuwe talenten, 2017). We realize that this is not easy for the receiving teacher, as his/her NT2 expertise is often not sufficient and because it is organizationally difficult to make time in the timetable for a student with specific needs in already large classes. For this, schools can seek help and expertise from Ambulatory Language Support Officers (ATOs). (www.ato-amstelveen.com).



Especially with older children, the gap between a second-year newcomer and a Dutch-speaking peer is large. The difference can range from about 2000 to 3000 words in a grade 3 student, but in a grade 7 student it can be as much as 7000 to 9000 words. If there is no additional provision for vocabulary in Dutch, a second-year newcomer will never have a chance to catch up. School language words are especially important! Often it may seem that a child already speaks Dutch very fluently because his daily general language skills are in good order. Cognitive academic language skills (school language words) are a lot lower.

The transfer to secondary education

Students who are twelve years or older may move on to secondary education. Futuris (Panta Rhei) has International Transition Classes in Amstelveen where NT2 offerings are given at VMBO /HAVO level. Occasionally it happens that a student goes directly from Amstelveen to VO.



3. The curriculum of Amsteltaal

Amsteltaal offers a curriculum focused on newcomer education, continuously optimized to prepare students for regular Dutch-speaking education. Case subjects are not taught separately, but are integrated into language and vocabulary education. Visual education and music are also integrated within thematic education. Because of our group-through education model, we do not offer a separate enrichment program, but students can receive instruction at a higher level. This means that students can switch between instructional groups to be challenged at their own level.

Within Amsteltaal, teams are working according to the principles of Treatment Oriented Work (HGW), which allows teams to better deal with the differences between students. The focus here is on making all students successful through differentiation in approach.

Principles of Treatment-Focused Work:

1. Students are not all treated the same; different approaches are used depending on individual needs.
2. The focus is on positive aspects and offers perspective for change. We look primarily at growth and learning outcomes and constantly ask: what does this child need from us in order to develop to his or her fullest potential?
3. Cooperation between school and parents is essential, with both parties striving for the best for the child.
4. Action-oriented Work is a cyclical process that proceeds in clear steps: observe, understand, plan, realize and evaluate.

In the following paragraphs you can read how we work with instructional groups and we explain per subject area what falls under basic support at Amsteltaal and what support we can offer extra.

Working with instructional groups

At Amsteltaal, we work cross-group because that way we can serve as many students as possible at their own level. We work with different level groups for technical reading, spelling and maths.

If necessary, the teaching assistant can also take on an extra instruction group. Thematic language and vocabulary teaching is provided within the child's own group in order to best suit the age group and group spirit.



When new pupils enter the middle or upper school group, they are assigned to the existing instructional groups. This may mean that sometimes a new pupil may not work at the right level for the first few weeks. Instructional groups are revised every three to four weeks on average. If a pupil progresses quickly, he/she can work at a higher level. And if offerings prove too difficult, a step back can be taken in consultation with the SEN coordinator.

Language and vocabulary

At Amsteltaal, we work on both oral and written language skills on a daily basis. We use the Wereld vol Woorden thematic method and LOGO for this purpose. We take a functional-communicative approach wherever possible. Pupils use the language they learn directly in meaningful contexts. To exchange ideas, to make something or to learn something new. We work on the basis of themes from the Wereld vol Woorden method combined with LOGO 3000 and Zien is Snappen. Within the context of the theme, we pay explicit attention to the building blocks of the Dutch language, such as sounds, words and sentences. All Amsteltaal groups work on the same theme at the same time, which means that the entire school (including the hall and corridors) can be set up as a language-rich learning environment. This means that pupils are stimulated as soon as they arrive.

Undergraduate group

The themed lessons are based on topics relevant to preschoolers. These may differ from those used in middle and upper grades. Here, the words from the BAK list and the materials from LOGO 3000 form the basis, supplemented with words that are meaningful in the context of a (subject) lesson or current events.

In daily practice, this means that preschoolers are presented with a cluster or picture card with new words five times a week. This is done using the Four-Step Method developed by Verhallen and Van der Nulft. In addition, we explicitly repeat the words in all other activities, such as reading aloud, crafts, arithmetic, preparatory writing, videos, singing, (digital) games, etc. This way, the children hear the words many times a day and in different contexts. We also challenge the children to use the vocabulary passively and actively.

Middle and secondary group

All themed lessons are given within the pupils' own groups. The vocabulary taught is the same in all middle and upper school groups, but the activities are tailored to the age of the pupils. We aim to teach pupils a basic Dutch vocabulary of 2,500 to 4,000 words in one school year, depending on their age and level. In daily practice, this means that we offer 90-minute themed lessons five times a week, with explicit attention to 10 to 15 new words. In each group, this is done using the Four-Step Method developed by Verhallen and Van der Nulft. In addition, the meaningful context of the theme provides ample opportunity to learn extra words through doing and talking. This context also enables pupils to pick up additional new words.



Incidental and intentional learning go hand in hand. We work partly in class and partly in instruction groups at three levels. We challenge pupils to use the language/words they learn immediately, for example in a writing or question game.

The teachers determine for each lesson day which level of activity is most suitable for which pupil. For example, a pupil may do a word game at a higher level one day and be offered a grammar exercise at a lower level the next day. In the instruction groups, attention is also paid to NT2 grammar using the Zien is Snappen teaching method. The starting point is again that we offer grammar in a meaningful context. Ultimately, we want children to be able to transfer what they have learned and apply it in other contexts. Then they have really learned!

The many aspects of language

During the lessons, we also focus on language functions and pragmatics: which language is appropriate in which situations? Pupils practise social language functions such as greeting people and asking for information. Through role-playing, children practise common language situations (asking for directions, paying for something in a shop). Cognitive language functions such as describing, comparing and reasoning are also addressed.

We strive for as much linguistic interaction as possible between the teacher and pupils and between pupils themselves. To this end, we use, for example, bilingual conversations, but also language-thinking conversations. By offering pupils plenty of opportunity to speak within a safe and challenging context, they are given ample opportunity to experiment with language and their language learning mechanism is activated. They learn language by using language. The interaction in such a small group gives the teacher plenty of scope for targeted scaffolding and feedback. The pupils' mother tongues are regularly addressed in vocabulary lessons: which English words are similar to words in other languages; how does a word sound in your language? We are investigating how we can expand functional multilingual learning.

To stimulate written language production, we use language rounds, among other things. In a language round, oral and written language complement each other, enriching and supporting each other. Small steps are taken to arrive at a written text (middle and upper grades) or language drawing. In a language round, children talk, listen, write and read aloud about things they themselves observe, think and experience. The starting point is the child's own experience, so that all children can participate at their own (language) level. Technical language skills such as spelling and grammar play a secondary role. The emphasis is mainly on language expression with vocabulary (building) that falls within the context of the subject. Of course, we don't just focus on oral language development in the themed lessons. During creative lessons, maths and reading, music and gym class, we also pay explicit attention to Dutch words and encourage and help pupils to express their thoughts and ideas in Dutch. After all, everything is LANGUAGE.



If pupils have difficulty keeping up with the lessons, they are given extra practice time with a teaching assistant at least twice a week during vocabulary lessons to repeat or pre-teach the words they have been taught. This takes place under the supervision of a teacher, with intensive work on the words that have been taught. At home, pupils can practise extra with the Logo Digitaal software programme, which allows them to further practise the words they have learnt in class.

If we notice that a pupil is still struggling with the Dutch language even after extra practice, we have a screening carried out by a speech therapist or Viertaal to obtain more in-depth information about the child's (native) language development.

Spelling

For a number of years now, we have been using the STAAL spelling method. Staal's spelling curriculum emphasises modelling and constant repetition of spelling categories. Teacher instruction is at the heart of the method, which helps to prevent mistakes as much as possible. Several mainstream primary schools in Amstelveen use the Staal method, which means there is often continuity for the pupils. Four times a week, the pupils receive 25 minutes of spelling lessons in class in instruction groups of up to 16 pupils.

If a pupil has difficulty keeping up with the programme or is more advanced, they can switch instruction groups. This allows the pupil to repeat the material or be challenged further. At home, there is the option of extra practice at spellingoefenen.nl.

Reading

Sound Education

Phonics forms the basis of our teaching. Only by being able to distinguish between sounds and pronounce them correctly can children understand and produce Dutch. For these reasons, all new pupils at Amsteltaal are first offered sound lessons before the technical reading lessons start. Every day, the pupil receives sound lessons at two different times, until all sounds have been covered. This takes about two weeks in total. Each sound lesson lasts about ten minutes. We practise the new sound briefly but intensively. This is often done in a playful manner and with lots of movement.



The programme is based on NT2 teaching methods: from receptive and reproductive to productive. Every week, the nursery school pupils are introduced to a new sound, which they practise several times in a playful manner. After introducing the sound, we assess whether our goals have been achieved by means of a test.

We offer remedial sound lessons for children who struggle with certain sounds. If children still have difficulty with certain sounds after the remedial lessons, we recommend a speech therapy screening so that we can provide a tailored programme.

Technical reading and reading comprehension

Every day at Amsteltaal, we work on technical reading. We use materials from Veilig Leren Lezen (Safe Learning to Read) and Actief leren lezen (Active Learning to Read). We do this in the form of a reading circuit in which, in addition to the technical aspect, attention is also paid to reading comprehension. This reading circuit consists of three rounds: 20 minutes of instruction, 20 minutes of using software, and 20 minutes of independent work, such as a processing assignment, a reading game, or tutor or duo reading. Children read for 20 minutes in an instruction group with the teacher. There, they initially receive instruction on the sound-symbol connection in Dutch and gradually begin to read words and sentences.

Independent reading (for pleasure) is also part of the reading circuit. At school, we offer a range of reading, search, comic, picture and non-fiction books in various languages. The children are allowed to choose their own book. When choosing a reading book, pupils must select a book that matches their reading level. We also encourage children to borrow books from the library or bring books from home (in their own language). We try to bring the children up to their exit level for technical reading within one year. When testing (AVI and DMT), we focus on reading with few errors. We consider this to be more important than a high reading speed.

During reading lessons, attention is also paid to reading comprehension. In line with Wereld vol Woorden, we have created a “Reading with Comprehension” database for each theme. The texts in the database are divided into three reading levels. The database is supplemented by all teachers. During their training, teachers learned how to select texts at the appropriate level. We also believe that reading enjoyment is important when it comes to reading comprehension. We therefore use different types of texts: informative texts, stories, songs, rhymes and verses, but also argumentative texts so that a particular topic can be discussed. Teachers can effectively search the database for a text that matches the theme and level of the pupils.

Reading comprehension is offered at least twice per theme. We differentiate within the group at three levels. The teacher guides the different groups during reading. Depending on the level and type of text, the pupils work independently or together with the teacher on the questions in the text. In addition to the texts from the database, the upper school teachers also use texts from Nieuwsbegrip. This method is used by many mainstream schools. The emphasis here is on text comprehension and less on reading strategies.

In February 2025, we received training on offering “rich texts”. We started working with these because they not only challenge pupils linguistically, but also stimulate them in terms of content. They contain rich vocabulary, deal with meaningful themes and invite pupils to think and talk. In this way, we hope to strengthen their language skills, world knowledge and reading enjoyment. In 2025-2026, we will become proficient in working with rich texts and further expand the database with “rich texts”.

In the event of underperforming academic results, we offer additional support, such as at least two extra reading sessions per week with a teaching assistant, supervised by a teacher. In addition, the pupil can participate in double instruction, whereby 40 minutes of instruction is given in two different groups. RALFI reading is also part of the additional support, whereby the same text is repeated throughout the week.

Maths

Maths with newcomers presents a challenge! Teaching mathematics involves the use of language: both instructional language and computational language. Newcomers, especially in the first weeks, do not yet have sufficient knowledge of the Dutch language to understand instruction properly. Children need to learn specific calculation language, such as the use of numerals and concepts like ‘more/less’, ‘almost’, together’, plus/ minus’, et cetera. All this language needs to be taught explicitly.

Many of our pupils have already received maths education in their country of origin. The level of the incoming pupils is very diverse. Sometimes pupils have learned arithmetic strategies that are unclear to us, or that we even find undesirable in the Netherlands. On the other hand, it may happen that a child does not yet know enough strategies and solves all math problems by counting (by fingers or by heart) or numerically. Automation/ memorisation skills sometimes fall short of what we in the Netherlands consider desirable. Learning to work with supporting materials and models, and the ability to work with tables, diagrams or graphs, often requires extra attention because our students have not become familiar with these in their countries of origin.





When they start at Amsteltaal, all pupils from grade 4 onwards take a Bareka test. This test helps us to get a good idea of the pupil's level of arithmetic. Sometimes a grade 3 pupil has such a high level of arithmetic that an exception is made with a Bareka test. Based on the results of the test, the students are divided into instruction groups according to their own level. School-wide, we have room for approximately 14 level groups. The subject of arithmetic/mathematics is on the schedule four days a week. Each group receives 4 x 25-30 minutes of instruction per week and works on processing assignments for 4 x 25-30 minutes. Due to the language aspect of the lessons, the pace per lesson varies.

Currently, math lessons are planned and conducted based on the LOWAN learning pathways. The teacher responsible draws up a plan for his or her instruction group, in which the specific learning objectives are planned, implemented, and evaluated afterwards. This is done using a universal goal planner, which is used school-wide. The content of the lessons is the responsibility of the teaching teacher, and there are two methods available at the school for this purpose.

For young pupils learning arithmetic at grade 3 level, we use the Semsom method. This math method focuses heavily on learning math language, active learning, and understanding. The method devotes a lot of time to repeating and automating the math strategies presented. This is done by playing games in the digital Semsom environment or by playing math games independently or with a teacher assistant.

For older students who are at the grade 3 level or above, we use the Getal en Ruimte Jr. math method. This method focuses heavily on the linguistic aspect of math and each lesson focuses on just one math strategy. We use scaffolding and intensive language support. In addition to the assignments in the math book, supplementary materials are provided where necessary. We use the digital software from Rekensprint Online, which allows students to apply and automate specific math skills. We also have a large repertoire of math games that students can play together.

If, after administering the Bareka test, there is still uncertainty about a child's math skills, an alternative method for determining the correct level will be considered in consultation with the IB coordinator. This helps us to obtain more information about math knowledge, insight, and use of strategies, so that we can then determine what support the student needs. When students have difficulty with one or two math components, we offer extra instruction. This is provided by a teaching assistant under the supervision of a teacher, so that the student can get extra practice on the components they have not yet mastered.

Social-emotional learning and citizenship

At Amsteltaal, we pay a lot of attention to the well-being of our students. We try to create as safe an educational environment as possible in our school. Newcomers are vulnerable because of the completely



new context they find themselves in. In addition, they have to learn to deal with their multiple identities (Ruimte voor nieuwe talenten, 2017). We create safety by providing a clear daily structure and tailoring education to the students. This makes these students feel competent and appreciated for who and what they are. We believe that children with possible trauma also benefit from this and work according to the principles of trauma-sensitive education.

The teachers at Amsteltaal work in a culturally sensitive manner. For example, during thematic work, we pay attention to things that may be different in the Netherlands than the children were used to. This is not about right or wrong, but about 'different'; we focus more on similarities than differences.

Once a week, the pupils receive a class lesson from the Peaceful School for Newcomers. During these lessons, specific attention is paid to social-emotional development and democratic citizenship. The aim of the lesson is then revisited throughout the week during various other moments. The idea behind the Peaceful School is also that the school is a place where our pupils can practice and put their skills into practice. With everything we offer, we aim to ensure that our pupils can make the transition to mainstream Dutch education with confidence and find their place in Dutch society.

At Amsteltaal, we offer Rock and Water training to students who need it on a social-emotional level. This training helps these students improve their social skills and physical resilience through movement and awareness. They learn to be strong (Rock) and flexible (Water), depending on the situation.

Gymnastics

The pupils in the middle and top years have PE lessons twice a week with a specialised teacher. Wherever possible, the PE lessons also focus on vocabulary. Many words can be learned by doing!

Creative and music

Creative activities tie in as much as possible with the school-wide theme being worked on. Explicit attention is also paid to vocabulary within these lessons. For the creative lessons, we use the digital method *Laat Maar Zien*, among others, for support and inspiration.

For music lessons, Amsteltaal participates in the 'Free as a Songbird' programme. In 'Free as a Songbird', newcomer children learn the Dutch language while singing. Vocabulary, pronunciation and sound formation are woven through the lessons as a guideline. The music method links up with our vocabulary method 'Wereld vol Woorden'. The lessons have been developed in cooperation with music teachers, music therapists and language professionals. When you have a song 'in your head', you automatically repeat certain words in your mind or while singing. In this way, the children practise the language in a fun way throughout the week, promoting fluency at the same time. Funny singing exercises consciously focus on sound formation and pronunciation, because singing makes it much easier.



4. Pupil care: development and support

Tailored education

Tailored education means that every child has the right to a good education tailored to his or her qualities and abilities. This means that we strive for a learning environment in which all pupils can develop optimally, regardless of any learning difficulties, behavioural problems or other specific needs. Inclusiveness is an important principle: we ensure that all pupils can find a place at our school.

Key issues of appropriate education at our school:

1. Inclusiveness: We ensure that all pupils, including those with special needs, can find a place at our school.
2. Collaboration: We work closely with parents and carers to provide appropriate support.
3. Customisation: Our education is tailored to the individual needs of each child.
4. Support plan: In our school guide we describe how we provide appropriate education and what facilities we have.
5. Duty of care: We are responsible for providing a suitable educational place for every pupil. If Amsteltaal does not turn out to be the right place, we will search for a suitable alternative place of education together with the parents.

Development and testing

At Amsteltaal, pupils' development is closely monitored and supervised. The teacher has primary responsibility in this, with support and monitoring by the internal supervisor (SEN coordinator). If necessary, the expertise of remedial educationalists or (child) psychologists of Stichting Amstelwijs or Stichting Orion can be called in. The group size is deliberately kept small (maximum 16 pupils) in order to give sufficient individual attention. When a pupil transfers to regular Dutch education, there is always a warm transfer between the Amsteltaal teacher and the teacher at the new school. This ensures that the new teacher has sufficient information from the start to offer the pupil the right support and challenge.

Primary school (group 1/2)

The pupils in the preschool group are not tested (except for vocabulary) but are intensively observed and followed with a preschool observation system. We use the Parnassys Learning Lines for the Young Child for this purpose. Observation and adjustment is done on a daily basis. In addition, the pupil follow-up system is completed three times a year, during which new goals are set and achieved goals are evaluated. A parent meeting is held three times a year to discuss the child's progress.



Middle school/upper school

We monitor pupils closely using our digital pupil tracking system Schoolkr8. This keeps track of all pupils' data and test results. Pupils take method tests throughout the year and three times a year method-independent tests. After each test period - so at least three times a year - parents are invited to Amsteltaal for a brief discussion about their child's progress. Naturally, the teachers are open to inform parents more often about their child's development if there is a need or reason to do so.

Pupils move in and out throughout the year, so each pupil has an individual test schedule. There are no test weeks at Amsteltaal; pupils are grouped according to their intake period.

At Amsteltaal, we do not adapt tests. During the tests, we offer language support by explaining what words mean or by translating words, provided this does not affect the test answers. This approach ensures that our students understand the test questions well and receive a fair assessment of their skills, regardless of their language background. In addition, students who have only been at Amsteltaal for a short time are allowed to translate the redaction sums into their own language in method-dependent tests for arithmetic.

Minimum targets

In the newcomer groups, we work with special learning lines for newcomers. We apply the nationally used minimum targets of the ITK Haarlem and also follow their 13-26-39-week cycle. This means that our curriculum is divided into three 13-week periods, with pupils being tested after each period to measure their progress.

New pupils are linked to a learning line based on three criteria. This allows us to establish intermediate and final goals and provide the appropriate educational offer for them.

These criteria are:

1. Calendar age.
2. In which group is the pupil now?
3. (Un)Literate and (un)related literate

At Amsteltaal, we distinguish between literacy in languages that use the Latin script and other languages. Students who are familiar with the Latin script generally learn to read and spell faster in Dutch. Because a large proportion of our students develop well and achieve relatively good results, Amsteltaal has adjusted the national minimum targets upward. We continue to collect data and evaluate at the end of each school year whether to adjust our minimum targets again.



Individual Development Plan (IOP)

The IOP (student file) is started within four weeks after the start of a new student. The teacher uses the data from the intake and for the middle and upper school students data from the starting tests. The development of the junior pupils is, as indicated above, followed through observations and noted in the Pupil Curriculum in our Parnassys system. The student file is also immediately the Educational Report (OKR), which we share with the continuation school and gives them, together with a verbal explanation, a good picture of the level and needs of the student.

Pupil review and cooperation with external parties

The Amsteltaal team tries to support and follow the development of the pupils as adequately as possible. Therefore, regular consultation takes place, both internally and with external partners.

Three times a year, after each testing period, there is a student meeting in which all students are discussed. We indicate who we are concerned about, discuss how to adjust the curriculum or look for the right form of help. If necessary, we work intensively with external partners such as the educational specialist of the Amstelronde Partnership, the school doctor or speech therapists.

The management and SEN coordinator consult weekly on the support needs within the school. Important items on the agenda are student care, the use of support and teaching assistants and innovations within education.



Youth Care

Once every four weeks, the SEN coordinator consults with the youth support worker about students and families in need of youth or family support. Both teachers, the SEN coordinator and parents can involve the youth aid provider. The youth aid worker has an advisory role, can refer to external agencies and can set up an aid program within the school.

School doctor/nurse

The GGD school doctor/nurse performs twice-yearly ear and eye screenings for five- and six-year-olds. Upper school students are eligible for a periodic health examination (PGO). After parental consent, the findings are discussed with the SEN coordinator and teacher.

Care Advisory Team (ZAT)

The ZAT meets four times a year under the leadership of the SEN coordinator. Participants include the school attendance officer, youth aid worker and school nurse (sometimes the school doctor) of the GGD. The goal is to coordinate assistance for students with complex care needs. Parents' permission to discuss their child is requested in advance and they are informed afterwards about the matters discussed.



Orion Expertise Center

The Orion Expertise Center provides support and arrangements for students with intensive educational needs. They can set up a guidance program within the group and instruct the teacher in this. There is regular consultation with the consultant for appropriate education, the SEN coordinator and, if necessary, the teacher. Sometimes the consultant joins the support team (OT).

Samenwerkingsverband Parent Support Centre

The Samenwerkingsverband Amstelronde offers a parent support point for parents who still have questions after discussions with school. More information is available at: <http://amstelronde.nl/oudersteunpunt>.

Support

Amstelronde Cooperation

Our school is a member of the Amstelronde cooperation. Amstelronde's mission is to offer good education to all pupils, where (educational) support and guidance is available to both pupils and teachers. The help is provided as quickly as possible, in the lightest possible form, as close to home as possible and in the most appropriate manner. The partnership promotes that we organize the support necessary to create an appropriate offer that meets the educational needs of the pupils and the support needs of the teacher. An educational specialist is linked to Amsteltaal from the Amstelronde partnership. The support route from the partnership: <https://amstelronde.nl/website/wp-content/uploads/ondersteuningsroute-liggende.pdf>

More information

If you have questions about appropriate education or support, your child's teacher is your first point of contact. If the teacher cannot answer your questions, you can contact the SEN coordinator of Amsteltaal. For more information or questions about Samenwerkingsverband Amstelronde, you can also visit the website: www.amstelronde.nl or contact the Education Desk of SWV Amstelronde. You can reach them by telephone on 020-6401917 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10:00 and 15:00, or by e-mail at info@amstelronde.nl.

Support route from Amsteltaal

The support route at Amsteltaal is based on the support route of SWV Amstelronde and divided into the following four levels:

Care level 1: All students receive the basic offer. If there is short-term extra support, we call this a light intervention. This falls under the basic support.

Care level 2: If a student is underperforming or struggling with the course material, an analysis of their educational needs is first carried out. Subsequently, intensive intervention is applied and consideration is given to what additional support is needed. After eight to ten weeks, progress is evaluated. If there is improvement, the student returns to care level 1.



Care level 3: With insufficient or no progress, an action plan is used. After eight to ten weeks another evaluation takes place.

Care level 4: If after the intensive intervention still insufficient progress is made, if necessary the educational specialist of Samenwerkingsverband Amstelronde is called in for advice. After care level 4, the support route of the partnership follows.

What support do we provide and what support do we not?

Chapter 3 describes the basic and extra support available for each subject. Below we give an overview of the support we can and cannot offer at our school.

Support we offer:

We currently offer support for:

- NT2 (Dutch as a second language) problems;
- Mild obstacles in behavior and learning partly as a result of psychiatric disorders such as ADHD or autism spectrum disorders;
- Reading, arithmetic and spelling problems;
- Students with TOS (language development disorders);
- Complex, burdened home situations;
- Very difficult learning level (IQ >55);
- Visually impaired and/or hearing impaired students (with specialized, ambulatory guidance).

Support we are basically unable to provide*:

At this time we cannot meet the support of:

- Severe obstacles in behavior and learning partly as a result of psychiatric disorders such as severe ADHD or autism spectrum disorders.
- Students who require structural one-on-one guidance and lack sufficient skills to participate in a classroom setting.
- Blind and/or deaf students.

**Thereby we look at each case, in consultation with the partnership, what is/is not possible.*

What if a child's development is stagnating?

If a student's educational needs are unclear or there are serious problems or a disorder, the student may be reported to a support team (OT). This team consists of the education specialist, SEN coordinator,



parents and teacher. Depending on the request for help, an external expert may also participate. The OT focuses on the central request for help from the school and parents, led by the SEN coordinator. The education specialist plays a crucial role in determining the necessary support for the child within the Amstelronde area.

For pupils who do not achieve the minimum target goals for several subjects and for whom an OT is started, a Developmental Perspective (OPP) is drawn up. For this, all schools use the (digital) system called Tommy. This plan includes adapted learning lines and educational goals. If necessary, these students receive support from the group teacher and possibly an extra support person outside the classroom. The internal supervisor assumes a guiding and directing role in drawing up and evaluating the OPP, in collaboration with parents and teachers. The OPP is also used when external support is needed, such as by an ambulant supervisor from Viertaal.

The OT periodically evaluates whether the set developmental goals are being achieved. If necessary, the OPP is adjusted or another route is considered, such as an observation arrangement from the SBO at Amsteltaal or a placement at the S(B)O.

Safety

Schools are required by law to provide a safe environment for everyone within the school: students, teaching staff, educational support staff, parents, et cetera. Safety is enshrined in a number of laws. Our school has a safety policy that is updated annually. Twice a year we conduct a survey of middle and upper school students and all parents to monitor their (social) safety perception within and around the school. The results give us important information to see what we can improve to ensure that all students feel safe at Amsteltaal. Juf Helen and Juf Monique are anti-bullying coordinators. To the children we call them the 'listening teachers'; students can go to them if they have a problem.

Reporting code for child abuse and domestic violence

Amsteltaal is responsible for the safety of children and their parents. The internal counselor (IB) is the point of contact and advisor for students, parents, and colleagues, and knows how to identify (early) signs and deal with child abuse and domestic violence. If anyone has questions or wishes to report (suspected) child abuse and/or domestic violence, they can contact the IB.

The reporting code is in place to quickly provide effective assistance to students who are experiencing violence or physical/mental abuse at home. This reporting code is accompanied by an assessment framework. The assessment framework supports Amsteltaal deciding whether a report is necessary or whether providing and organizing assistance themselves is also an option.



The Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Reporting Code is included in Amsteltaal's Safety Plan. It states:

1. when reporting possible child abuse and/or domestic violence is necessary.
2. what types of unsafety there are.
3. the step-by-step plan of the reporting code. The reporting code of domestic violence and/or child abuse consists of five mandatory steps.



5. Cooperating with parents

We are committed to involving parents in the school as much as possible. We do this in the following ways:

- Teachers hold an intake interview with parents just before a new student starts or in the first few weeks after a new student has started.
- After the testing and observation periods of 13, 26 and 39 weeks, parents are invited to a parent meeting. If a parent would like an earlier or more frequent meeting, they are always welcome to make an additional appointment with the teacher.
- Parents are invited to attend and/or help with the joint celebrations.
- Six times a year we organize parent meetings on relevant topics.
- All parents are invited to attend a lesson in the group of their child(ren). For this they can make an appointment by mail with the teacher(s) of their child(ren).
- We ask a number of parents (with some knowledge of the Dutch or English language) to go along as an accompaniment on school trips/excursions.
- We regularly publish a newsletter, which parents receive by e-mail.
- Care pupils are regularly discussed with IB (SEN coordinator), teacher and parents.
- We provide Dutch language lessons for parents.
- On our parents' page on the website there is information about important topics.
- Through the parent app 'Parro' parents are kept up to date on what is going on in the classroom through messages and photos.



6. Practical matters

Breaks and lunch

In the morning, all students have a short break of about 15 minutes and eat fruit brought by themselves. All children continue to eat at school at noon. We encourage healthy eating, so no prickly lemonade or candy. We also count chips and French fries as unhealthy foods that do not belong at school.

Between noon and 1 p.m., the children play outside for 20 minutes and lunch is eaten together under the supervision of the teacher. Students must bring their own lunch.

Students in the preschool group play outside for approximately 45 minutes twice a day.



Ill ... and then?

In the case of a child's illness, the parent or caregiver must call in sick by 8:25 a.m. via the Parro app. The teacher and/or school administration will keep in touch with the parent or caregiver so that timely measures can be taken if a learning delay occurs.

Teachers are also sick from time to time. In that case, an attempt is made to arrange for a replacement. However, sometimes this is not successful. It is fortunately rare that we have to send our students home, but should this be the case, we will always contact the parents/guardians. Therefore check Parro every day!

Arriving late

We expect all students in school at 8:35 a.m. so that we can really start classes at 8:45 a.m. The door to the school opens at 8:35 each day so that there is sufficient time to enter quietly, take a look around the classrooms and, if necessary, briefly discuss or ask something with the teacher. It is very important to us that all children arrive at school on time. If a student is late for school, it is very annoying for the teacher and other students, but also for the child itself. When your child is late, this is recorded by the teacher. If a child has been late three times, the teacher will invite the parents for a meeting. If it happens five times, parents will be invited to seek an appropriate solution with the director. After seven times, Compulsory Education is called in. This applies to the entire period that the child is at our school. We hope that all of this will not be necessary and everyone will be present on time!



Birthday Treats

When your child has a birthday, your child may bring a treat. We like to see healthy treats, including for the teachers. Please keep it small!

If too many treats are brought in, one item will be chosen for treats.

What remains will be taken home.



Leave of absence

From the age of five, children in the Netherlands are subject to compulsory education and may not be absent without a valid reason. U can only request leave with a good reason, the rules for this are strict!

It may happen that parents want to go abroad outside the regular school vacations for a wedding or other important event. Parents must then consult with the principal well in advance (officially eight weeks) and fill out a form. This form and its rules can also be found on the Amsteltaal website.

Also, if your child needs to go to the dentist, doctor or hospital, you will need to discuss this. We assume that your child will only be absent if the medical appointment really cannot be rescheduled. Absence must be limited to the time needed for the visit to the doctor, dentist or hospital.

For religious holidays you can also request leave of absence. This is usually for one day and should also be requested officially.

After school care

If parents are looking for after-school care for their child(ren), this is possible. Amsteltaal works together with a number of childcare organizations in Amstelveen, where the care is aligned with our school hours.

For **Amsteltaal-Noord**, BSO Kinderrijk Piet Hein is our partner (www.kinderrijk.nl).

For **Amsteltaal-Zuid**: Kinderrijk (www.kinderrijk.nl) is located in the same building as Amsteltaal-Zuid. BSO Boon (www.bsoboan.nl) is located at the De Meerkamp swimming pool and will pick up your child from school. Kids Aktief is located in the RODA '23 clubhouse opposite our school (www.kidsaktief.nl). UniKidz has various locations in Amstelveen (www.unikidz.nl). Enjoy Childcare is also located in Amstelveen (www.enjoythewebsite.nl). If you are interested, please contact them directly. We would like to emphasize that Amsteltaal/ Amstelwijs is in no way responsible for the organization or quality of these childcare organizations. If you have any questions and/or comments, please contact the organization in question.



Parental contribution

Education is free in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, every Dutch elementary school asks for a voluntary annual parental contribution. At Amsteltaal this is € 55.00 per pupil for the entire period that your child(ren) stays with us. From this money we pay for excursions (library, school trip and Taaltrip) and celebrations such as Sinterklaas, Christmas and Easter. Of course your child can participate in the activities even if the contribution has not (yet) been paid. For the payment of this contribution you will receive a message from our administration.

All school supplies your child needs (books, exercise books, writing and craft materials) are provided by the school. There is one exception to this: for hygienic reasons, we ask that all children bring their own headphones to work on the Chromebooks and other devices (this does not apply to the Red Tulips).

Complaints

Where people work together, sometimes things go wrong. As a parent, you may be dissatisfied with a variety of issues concerning the school. Experience shows that complaints are best resolved when you contact the teacher, SEN Coordinator or principal of the school directly.

To this end, we have made the following arrangements:

1. When it comes to an event in the group, the teacher is the first point of contact.
2. If after one or several conversations you feel that what you have discussed has not been handled or settled properly, you can request a conversation with the Amsteltaal management. This also applies if you have something to discuss on a subject that has nothing to do with the teacher or group.
3. There may be incidents or problems in which the aforementioned steps have not led to the desired result. In that case, you can contact the confidential advisor (appointed by the board). The confidant's task is to provide you with procedural support and referral if necessary. Wendy Schoegje and Ingrid van Wezel of Adviespraktijk David and Van Wezel are the external confidants for the schools of Amstelwijjs. They can be reached at telephone number 020-6650696 or 0655 326539 (www.david-vanwezel.nl) .
4. If, after all the preceding steps, you decide to file a formal complaint, this must be done in writing. You can read how this works in the complaints procedure. This can be found on the website of Amstelwijjs: www.amstelwijjs.nl.

Amstelwijjs is affiliated with the National Complaints Committee for Education in Utrecht.

Telephone: 030-2809590

E-mail: info@onderwijsgeschillen.nl

Website www.onderwijsgeschillen.nl



Privacy

At Amsteltaal we treat the privacy of our students with care. This is laid down in the privacy regulations of Amstelwijis, the board to which our school belongs. These regulations can be found at www.amstelwijis.nl, under the menu button 'parents'.

We only use personal data if it is necessary for the learning and guidance of our pupils, and for the organization necessary for this, such as, for example, the transfer to a regular school. We receive most of the data from parents (such as at school registration). In addition, teachers and support staff of the school register data about the pupils, for example in relation to tests. Sometimes special personal data are registered if this is necessary for the proper guidance of a student, such as medical data (you can think of allergies, dyslexia, ADHD, autism, etc.). Student data and their progress are stored in our (digital) administration system Parnassys and in our student tracking system Schoolkr8. These systems are secure and access to that data is restricted to staff of our school and the support office.

Parents have the right to see the data from and about their child(ren). If the data is incorrect, the information must be corrected. If the data stored is no longer relevant to the school, parents may ask to have that specific data deleted.

For the use of photos and video recordings of students for Parro (parent platform) and the newsletter, for example, we ask parents' permission. They can indicate this on the Consent Media form, which they receive at registration.

