

Welcome to School

ASVO



Amsterdamse Schoolvereniging voor Opvoeding en Onderwijs
Frederiksplein 37, 1017XL Amsterdam

020 6269005
info@asvo.nl - www.asvo.nl

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your child's first day at school...

Starting school is a very exciting time not only for your child, but probably also for you. It can take some for a child to get used to going to school: after all, school is not the same as a nursery school or playgroup.

We have produced this booklet to tell you about some key aspects relating to your child starting at our school. It also contains general information about the school itself. More detailed information is available in the school guide, via the [website](#).

We hope this booklet provides the answers to your most immediate questions.

Finally, we have added a few tips to give you some ideas on how best you can help your child at home with their schoolwork.

We hope you and your child very much enjoy your time at the ASVO!

The ASVO team

Start and finish of the school day

The school hours are:

Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri: 8.45-14.45

Wednesday: 8.45-12.45

Groups 1 and 2 use the entrance at the school playground on the ground floor; the doors open at 8.30. The lessons begin at 8.45.

When entering the classroom, the children offer their hand to the teacher. They do the same when leaving, so that there is a clearly-defined start and finish to the day for the children.

We prefer to start on time! The doors open at 8.30, and you may enter the classrooms **until 8.40** - after that time, you may say your good-byes only in the corridor. The day starts at 8.45, and parents are not permitted to enter the school after then.

The teachers are on hand to look after your child from 8.30. To make the transition from home to school easier, you and your child can select an exercise or activity together, beforehand. This will also be an opportunity to have a look inside the classroom. However, this is not the time to have a one-to-one conversation with the teacher - if you wish to do so, you should make an appointment to see him or her after school hours.

When the school ends at 14.45 (or 12.45 on Wednesdays), you should wait outside in the playground. As soon as the teacher has seen you (parent/guardian/childminder), he/she will shake hands with your child, who will then come to you or to the person collecting him or her. This means we are able to see who is collecting your child.

At the end of a school day, the teacher may already be outside with the children. The children will be sitting in groups in the playground, always in the same place, and will wait until they are collected (see the layout at the back of the booklet). It is important that you, or the person collecting your child, are on time. At the end of the school day, the children offer their hand to the teacher.

General meeting of members

When your child is enrolled at the ASVO, you as their parent automatically become a member of the ASVO: the school is an association, after all. A general meeting of members is held twice a year, at which the Board and other speakers report on current matters relevant to the ASVO, such as the annual report and budget, as well on ongoing educational or other relevant issues, often as part of a theme.

The Supervisory Board also attends the general meetings of members. The Supervisory Board is made up both of parents and external parties, thereby ensuring parental involvement as well as an objective perspective towards the school.

As a parent, you can pick up a great deal of information about the school at the general meetings of members; this is also the official opportunity to bring any issues to the attention of the Board and/or the Supervisory Board, or indeed to raise them during the meeting in general. You are warmly invited to attend!

Artis

Twice a year, Groups 1 and 2 visit Artis. On the days in question, the children should be taken directly to Artis, not to the school. Similarly, they should be collected from there, rather than from the school. You will be notified about this in advance.

If you have an Artis membership card, it would be very helpful if you gave it to your child. This will enable the school to save on entry fees.

Physical education

Children in Groups 1 and 2 have physical education every day.

This consists of play lessons in the games room, playing outdoors with supervision, and gymnastics with or without music and equipment. The classes usually have their gymnastics lessons with their own teacher. The children do gymnastics in their underwear and in their bare feet.

Every Monday morning, they are taught by a gymnastics teacher in the large gym on the top floor.

Caretakers

There are two caretakers at the ASVO - Tim van Bentum (present on Mondays and Tuesdays) and Mark Snitslaar.

They are the first point of contact at the entrance and for a whole range of matters, and they can refer you to the appropriate person or whatever it is you require.

They can be phoned on 020 62690065 or e-mailed at conciierge@asvo.nl

Among the matters you can contact them about are lost property, registration forms, authorised absence application forms, etc. They also take care of children who have hurt themselves and provide First Aid. For the children, teachers, and parents, the caretakers are a valuable point of contact.

Parent-teacher meetings

You will receive an official invitation to a parent-teacher meeting twice a year.

No report is issued before the first meeting, but a written report is issued for the second meeting. The report will be given to your child to take home, several days in advance of the meeting. It should be signed, to confirm that you have seen it, and then returned after the meeting.

If there is a reason for doing so, you may of course also meet with the teacher at other times. Please arrange this either by e-mail or at the start of the school day.

Lost property

Has your child lost something? If so, take a look in the container near the toddlers' entrance. There is a similar container in the yellow stairwell for Groups 3-8. Small items, such as necklaces, may be in the safekeeping of the caretakers. Having your child's name on each item will make it easier for them to be returned to you.

Information and parents' evening

At the start of each school year, after the summer holiday, a general information evening is held for each group, at which matters affecting the whole group are discussed. It is important that you attend this meeting. Please note that the discussion is not about individual children. There will be such a discussion around four weeks after your child has started at the school.

Birthday? Then it's time to celebrate!

Children's birthdays are celebrated in their class as a festive occasion, and of course the child in question is welcome to hand out tasty treats, preferably healthy ones!

This could be nibbles, pieces of cheese, sausage slices, popcorn, fruit, etc. Your child may also receive congratulations from other Group 1 and 2 teachers, as well as the caretakers and the head teachers. You should count on around ten additional treats for the other teachers and children from other classes.

Your child will be given a birthday card by their teacher with birthday wishes written by the teachers and others. At the end of the day, your child can take the card home.

It is a good idea to hand out invitations to birthday parties outside, rather than in the classroom itself or via the teacher, so that those children who are not invited will not be disappointed.

Parent classroom assistants

Some activities cannot take place without the assistance of others. A parent classroom assistant is on hand in every classroom to support the teacher in maintaining contact with parents on general matters. The parent classroom assistant may sometimes ask you to help out in the class or during certain special activities. This strengthens the bond between the teacher, children, and parents - after all, learning and teaching is a joint effort of us all!

Groups 1 and 2 teachers

Montessori

Group AA Karen van der Weide / Carla van Wijngaarden
Group BB Agaath de Bruijn / Bonnie van Caspel

Regular

Group CC Esther van der Zaag/ Jon van Olst
Group DD Katja Liess /Esther Kars

As well as teaching assistant Esther Begeman, there is also a classroom assistant for Groups 1 and 2: Tamara Voogt. They assist the teachers with their practical and teaching-related day-to-day work duties. The Groups 1 and 2 coordinator is Karen van der Weide.

Lice and nits

Unfortunately, some children are occasionally found to have lice - an unpleasant but unavoidable occurrence. The children are checked by a 'nit nurse' before and after every holiday. If your child is found to have lice, you will be notified and will have to collect him or her from school. You will also have to treat the lice - the school is not permitted to do this.

Your child will only be allowed to return to the school after he or she has been successfully treated.

Management team

The management team consists of the two departmental directors and the special educational needs coordinator.

They can be reached by phone on 020 6269005 and at the general e-mail address, info@asvo.nl. You can of course also e-mail them personally.

Regular	Marieke Laumans	m.Laumans@asvo.nl
Montessori	Jeroen Oomen	j.oomen@asvo.nl
special educational needs coordinator	Eric Lieverst	e.lieverst@asvo.nl

The management team is assisted by an office manager, Barbara Rouwendaal, who can also be reached on 020 6269005 and/or at administratie@asvo.nl

Notices / Parents' portal

The school has a parents' portal for parents of children at the school. Important notices are sent via the parents' portal. Upon becoming a member of the ASVO, you receive a token / log-in code. As well as notices and general information, the portal has photographs of celebrations and notable events at the school, all in a secure environment.

Collective consultation

The ASVO has a collective consultation body. It consists of four team members and four parents, with the two departments being represented proportionately. The collective consultation body meets around six times a year, and posts its reports in the parents' portal. The period of office for each member is three years. You may stand for election whenever a

vacancy arises if you would like to contribute your ideas to a range of issues affecting the ASVO.

The collective consultation body is an official entity with regard to certain areas in which decisions are required.

Medication

It may sometimes be necessary for your child to take medication for one reason or another. As a rule, the ASVO staff are not authorised qualified to administer medication. Discussions with the special educational needs coordinator always take place in order to organise how this could be done for your child during school hours.

The definition of medication also extends to paracetamol and other over-the-counter items. Medication is always administered in consultation with the child's parents or guardians.

Help from parents

Regular activities for which help from parents is needed are the infants' library, reading to the children, excursions, parties, sports days, museums, ICT, school trips, parent classroom assistance, the 'big school clean', and checking for nits.

The easiest way of volunteering is to add your name to the list held by the teachers.

Parents in the classroom

We assume that you will observe the classroom rules that we teach to the children. This includes being on time, not sitting on the tables, not talking loudly, not walking with shoes on the floor mats, and not using phones in the school.

Teaching is a joint undertaking, so we must all follow the school's rules.

Parent-child advisor

Before your child started school, you probably had dealings with the 'Ouder-Kind-Centrum' ('parent-child centre', OKC). The OKC has a dedicated team that the ASVO and you, as a parent or guardian, can use to find out more about such matters as healthy eating, sleeping problems, or help at home, of whatever kind. An advisor from the OKC is present once a week at the ASVO. See [the website](#) for the most up-to-date information and the advisor's contact details.

Breaks / lunchtime

There is a short break at about 10.30, during which the children eat some fruit and have a drink. Between 11.30 and 12.00, the children play outside, supervised by the playground attendants. The playground attendants share responsibility for all the children who are playing outside at any particular time.

At 12.00, the children have lunch with their own teacher in the classroom. Their lunches should preferably be carried in a rucksack, as opposed to a plastic bag, for example. Please give your child a sports-type bottle, rather than a mug with a lid.

All bottles, containers, and bags should bear your child's name. The ASVO is a healthy school, so no sweets, biscuits, or fizzy drinks are consumed during the breaks. We therefore assume that you will not give any of these items to your child.

Plants in the Montessori department

Part of the Montessori vision is that every child (in Groups 1 to 5) has a plant on their desk. The children themselves look after their plants. If any child's plant dies for whatever reason, then it is a good idea to replace it as soon as possible. The most suitable plants are those that are not particularly delicate.

Privacy

Like other educational institutions, the ASVO must comply with privacy legislation. This means, for example, that information about you and your child is for internal use only. In all other cases, such as sharing information with an external specialist, you will be asked to provide written permission. E-mails to and from the ASVO are secure.

Rules for playing outside

Playing outside is fun, but here too there are rules, such as:

- do not climb trees or play in the bushes
- shoes must not be taken off
- coats may only be taken off if the teacher agrees

Children must not play beyond the fences around the school. Cycling is not allowed in the playground, and we would prefer children not to use skates, skateboards, or scooters that are not provided by the school. These rules apply during the lunch breaks as well.

School doctor / nurse

When a child reaches the age of five, he or she is examined by the GGD (area health authority) school doctor - this is in accordance with an agreement with the city council. Children who reach the age of ten are also given an examination. You will receive a questionnaire in advance. The examinations are held discreetly at the school. You may state on the questionnaire whether you would like to be present, or indeed if you object to the examination. The results of the examinations are not shared with the school. The school doctor holds discussions after each examination with the special educational needs coordinator - please note that these discussions are only of a general nature. For more information, see the GGD [website](#).

School photographer

A school photographer visits the school once a year. Individual portraits are made, and pictures of brothers and sisters together may also be requested. Orders should be placed with the photographer - you will be notified automatically.

School calendar

Every year, the ASVO draws up a school calendar, which runs in tandem with the school year. It features all the important dates of the school year that are known at the time, including study days, holidays, parties, meetings, school trips, etc. The school calendar is on the parents' portal and may also be viewed on the website.

School milk

The ASVO no longer provides school milk. Children should bring their own healthy drinks in a sports-type bottle that they preferably are able to open themselves.

School trips

Once a year, the four toddler groups spend a day on a school trip. The teachers decide which parents are invited to come along; you cannot volunteer to do so. In the case of children who have not been at the school very long, we advise that you discuss with the teacher whether your child should go. For some of the youngest children, experience has shown that it can be just too much.

Slippers

For reasons of hygiene, slippers must be worn. Many of the activities in Groups 1 and 2 involve being on the floor or the ground: shoes are often full of sand from the sandpit. Please give your child a pair of slippers that they can put on and take off easily, preferably with non-slip soles.

Large slippers featuring animals are fun, but they are very hot and not at all practical for the children.

Toys

We would prefer the number of toys and cuddly animals that children bring to the school with them to be kept to a minimum. There are sometimes special toy mornings, to which your child may of course bring a toy with them to school. However, we would rather see toys that produce a lot of noise left at home. You will be automatically notified when a toy morning is due to take place.

Sports day

Once a year, there is a sports day for everyone in Groups 1 and 2 in Oosterpark, which is run by the gym teacher. You will be informed about this in advance.

Forbidden: smoking / dogs / use of phones

None of these is allowed at the school.

Smoking is permitted outside the perimeter fence, where waiting dogs should be tied up; phones may be used in the playground.

Authorised absence

Children of school age may not be absent from school outside the normal school holidays and official days off. Despite this, there may be circumstances when this is necessary.

You may request authorisation for your child to be absent, but only for compelling reasons. Please note that an extra holiday does not constitute a compelling reason.

Forms for requesting absence can be obtained from the caretaker or downloaded from [the website](#).

Requests must be submitted **eight weeks before the start of the requested period of absence** to the special educational needs coordinator, preferably online. Even if your child has not yet reached the age of five, we would prefer that you submit a request for absence.

Simply stating in an e-mail that your child is not coming to school is not sufficient.

Authorisation for absence can only be given if the rules relating to compulsory education have been met - these are shown on the application form. The school is obliged to notify the education authorities if any child is absent without authorisation.

Website

A great deal of information is available on our website: www.asvo.nl

You can use it to download the school guide and the school calendar, for example.

Be sure to visit it regularly!

Easing-in period

During the week before a child's fourth birthday, he or she will spend two mornings at the school (until 12.00) in order to get to know the teacher, the group, and the school. Once he/she has reached the age of four, he/she will start attending school for the whole of the day.

If it appears that your child needs a longer easing-in period, it can be extended to up to two weeks. However, this should only be in consultation with the teacher; the idea is not that you keep your child at home on random days of your choosing. Once your child has started school, it should be on the basis of a continuous learning process.

There are no easing-in days for children born four weeks before the summer holiday or in August - their first day of school is immediately after the summer holiday.

Children who come to the school on an easing-in morning should only bring a piece of **peeled** fruit and something to drink. Teachers do not have the time to wash or peel fruit that children have brought with them.

Independence

It is helpful if four-year-old toddlers are able to dress and undress themselves, due to the fact that gym lessons and playing lessons take place more or less every day. Will you please help your child to practise this? The teachers will of course help with zips and laces.

Illness - what to do?

If your child is unable to come to school because he or she is ill, please use the parents' portal to report the fact. It is helpful if you do so before 8.00, although it should be done in any case before the lessons are due to start, at 8.45. It is a cause for concern if a child is not present and the teacher has not heard anything, and you will be contacted by phone. If you prefer to phone the school, you may of course do so. From 8.00, the school can be contacted on

020 6269005

If your child wishes to come to school even though he or she is ill, we ask that you keep him or her at home. It regularly happens that teachers have to phone a child's parents asking that they be collected from school which, as well as increasing the teacher's workload, is an unpleasant experience for the child as well.

In the event of your child, or any family member, being diagnosed with an infectious disease, you should contact the special educational needs coordinator. We will then discuss what the most suitable course of action is, and whether or not your child should come to school. In some cases, the school is obliged to notify the GGD (area health authority) under the terms of the national 'infectious and contagious diseases' protocol.

Teacher ill - what happens then?

If a teacher is ill, the ASVO does all it can to arrange a replacement. This may be done internally, though sometimes help from outside will be necessary. The arrangements will be made through the departmental director. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to find a replacement, in which case the children will be placed in other classes, on the basis of a fixed rota. If possible, four-year-olds may go home.

Toilet training

Any child starting school should be toilet trained, and we expect them to be able to use the lavatories on their own. The school has the legal right to refuse admittance to any child until he or she is toilet trained. If your child is not yet toilet trained, we ask that you get in touch with us before he or she starts school.

Of course, there are occasional 'accidents'. If this happens, parents or guardians may be called and asked to collect their child.

Health - when learning and development are disrupted

Your child's learning and development may not always progress as it should; it could be that your child is having medical or psychological treatment, for whatever reason. In the school-support profile, the ASVO has set out what the school can and cannot organise. The school has a duty of care towards every child.

In such cases, the special educational needs coordinator always remains closely involved with the child concerned and every effort is made to see how your child - and if necessary you, his/her parent or guardian - can best be supported. The special educational needs coordinator is Eric Lieverst: e.lieverst@asvo.nl

The special educational needs coordinator is the hub of the ASVO care team, which consists of various specialists, including a remedial educationalist, education specialist, speech therapist, and language/reading specialist. Other specialists may be added to the team on an incidental basis if necessary, to ensure that your child is receiving the most inclusive education.

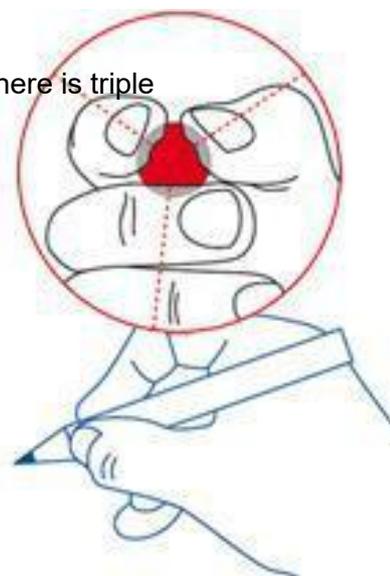
Tips for at home!

When at home, children often play with picture books, words and letters, draw, and 'write'. Below are some tips that you can use at home to help your child learn how things are done at school, in a fun and easy way.

Holding a pencil

When your child is drawing, have a look at how he or she is holding the pencil or crayon. If a child is not holding the pencil correctly, it can be very difficult to change this habit later on. Children should use the 'static tripod grasp' - see the image.

The static tripod grasp involves the child holding the pencil with the thumb and index finger slightly bent, and with the pencil resting on the middle finger. A useful 'tool' here is triple coloured crayons - that is, with three sides. They make supporting the crayon or pencil easier, when the static tripod grasp is used correctly.



Writing

Starting too early with writing can lead to problems later on. Write only lower case letters, not capitals. If your child wishes to write, make sure he or she writes the letters correctly.

In the case of these letters, start from the **top** of the stem:

l i k

With these letters, start from the **top** of the stem before **going back up part of the way** and completing the letter:

b h n p m r

For the following letters, it is first the round or curved section that is written, and then the remainder:

c o a d g

In the case of these letters, simply start from the top:

v w x z t j f s i

The **exception**:

e

Reading and language

Reading to children is important, and can be very enjoyable. It will introduce your child to a combination of imagery, written, and spoken language; he or she will hear how words are pronounced and that will benefit his or her own reading development.

Talk about the pictures or read from the book while your child is watching. He or she is then able to see what you are reading. If you move your finger as you read, your child can see the reading direction. Children are often very curious about written language. Try to talk carefully to your child and speak your words clearly so that he or she learns the correct words.

At the school, we initially pronounce letters as they actually sound. That means saying 'vvvvv', 'sssss', or 'fffff', rather than 'vee', 'ess', or 'eff'.

When spelling a word (for example, 'grass'), say 'ggg-rrr-a-sss' – and try 'singing' it as you say it.

It is important that children first learn the names of sounds, as shown above. Learning the letters of the alphabet is not easy as they do not always correspond to the sounds they represent. We therefore do not advise this, unless it is done auditorily, as shown above.

If your child shows no interest in language-related activities at home, do not push it; it is no cause for immediate concern. Every child becomes sensitive to language in their own time and you will notice it automatically. So don't force the matter - reading and language should first and foremost be fun and enjoyable, something for your child to discover. Encourage reading and books, and make visits to the library as a fun trip out. Your child will learn so much about language at school and enjoying reading is a great part of that!

You can download a list of basic words from the [ASVO website](#) that all toddlers in Amsterdam should know, not just children who speak more than one language. You can use these words extensively in your conversations with your child.

Numbers and counting

This is a whole new world! Let your child count and experience numbers by doing - that is, by counting physically. This could involve many different things: chestnuts in the autumn, Easter eggs in the spring, the number of bikes that pass by, how many eggs go in a cake, and so on.

It is important that your child is familiar with counting-related words such as more, less, equal, large, small, fat, thin, narrow, short, etc., as well as their comparative versions - large, larger, largest.

The same is true of counting as of reading - do not force it. Here, too, your child will become sensitive to counting in his or her own time. In this and many regards, no two children are the same. Actual arithmetic, involving simple sums mostly under 10, is part of the Group 1 and 2 activities. You will notice yourself when it happens.