

I, like many of my colleagues, breathed a sigh of relief when I was vaccinated against corona virus. Although we are working under the Covid-19 protocol for schools, designed to keep everyone as safe as possible, it would be wrong to say that staff are not sometimes anxious that they will contract the virus and that they don't worry about the potential impact it may have on their health and the potential impact it may have on colleagues and family members. As more and more staff though are vaccinated against the virus and as long as the numbers of cases in the Netherlands continue to decline, we hope that we can return to the 'norm', pre March 2020.

Strangely though for Early Years children, this is their 'norm'. Children in Nursery, and many Reception children know no different. They don't remember a time when the teacher greeting them in the morning didn't wear a face mask or when they didn't have to wash their hands each time they entered the classroom. These now are the 'norms' and the children just accept them as part of daily life.

Similar probably to every other Head of School in the Netherlands, I had mixed feelings each time the Dutch government announced that it was safe for primary schools to reopen. On the one hand, there was an immediate sense of relief that children would no longer have to follow lessons on-line. (however good a home learning programme is, it doesn't provide the children with the same learning experiences that they have in school) – yet there was the huge sense of responsibility of keeping, as far as possible, everyone within the school community safe.

I have strong memories of re-opening in May 2020 and again in February 2021. As soon as the children came back into school, I knew it was the right decision. The children easily re-connected with the teachers as they had had daily contact with them on-line but they also fell easily back into established routines. Most importantly, they reconnected with each other, and just enjoyed playing and working alongside their friends. They loved talking to their teachers about their experiences away from school. Nobody was upset or anxious about being away from home.

There is no doubt of the benefits an Early Years education offers to young children and their families. Children develop vital social skills which enable them to engage with teachers and peers. They learn to listen to each other and express their own ideas, they learn to play cooperatively with others and learn how to resolve conflict. They develop self-confidence, independence and resilience. In other words, the children equip themselves with skills that will support their learning throughout their school life.

If you are thinking about enrolling your child into a pre-school, then you might like to consider joining the Nursery at the British School of Amsterdam. Attendance is flexible to suit your personal child care needs, we understand too that many families are affected financially by the pandemic, perhaps part time attendance suits you financially whilst still providing your child with the type of education you are looking for.

We are open to visitors again, why not book a tour and come and see for yourselves what we offer. We would love to show you around.