

We have Esprit



Education Manifesto 2023-2027

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Esprit Schools: learning without boundaries in Amsterdam

This Education Manifesto is a re-evaluated and updated version of our 2018-2022 Education Manifesto. The Manifesto is the foundation underlying our educational vision, the basis for our strategic agenda, and a guiding principle for our professional conversations.



Esprit's values: inspiring, innovative, international

Our name says it all: Esprit is energy, vitality and inspiration. Esprit Schools stand for a contemporary – and sometimes contrary – approach to education, with an open connection to the whole world. Esprit is innovative and future-focused, with a strong emphasis on possibility and resilience. At Esprit Schools, we prioritise the personal development of our staff, both as individuals and in their roles as employees. Because our schools are close-knit communities that unite the learning journeys of staff and students alike, it's no wonder that they find their way to Esprit.

To facilitate this, we are courageous in going off the beaten path and pushing our own boundaries. The diversity within our schools is clear in everything we do. We offer education ranging from liberal arts and sciences to practical education, from education for newcomers to Montessori education, and from grammar school to international education. Our students are aged from four to 18 years and come from every part of Amsterdam. This diversity provides opportunities for thinking and acting outside the box, and for education without boundaries.





Esprit's ambitions

Development is the top priority at Esprit. We aim for sustainable development, not only for our staff and students, but also for the rest of our organisation, for Amsterdam and its surrounds, and for the whole world. We will continue on the course that we have already set for ourselves.

While the three pillars of our education remain the same, we are shifting the emphasis here and there to better respond to changes in the world around us:

- Possibilities for all students
- Valuable and meaningful work for all staff
- Strong collaborations with our local environment

Within these three pillars, we are introducing five focal points, each of which is highlighted in a box below. These will be the guiding principles for our policy in the years to come.

Possibilities for all students

Esprit Schools offers possibilities for all students by providing boundlessly excellent education. We teach our students to recognise and acknowledge boundaries, relate to the boundaries around them, and to push beyond their own boundaries.

By going out into and moving around in the world and in nature, we learn to engage with each other and to deal with change. We have high expectations of our students, and we challenge them to view the world in a new way. We stimulate them and encourage them to make and learn from mistakes. The variety at Esprit Schools requires flexibility in and connection between different educational paths and learning journeys, both within our schools and outside of them.

We break down barriers and create new ways for students to shape their growth, skills and talents, as well as their energy sources: after all, learning is about much more than just attaining a qualification. By taking this approach, we reduce the perceived pressure to achieve and qualify, and increase our students' resilience.





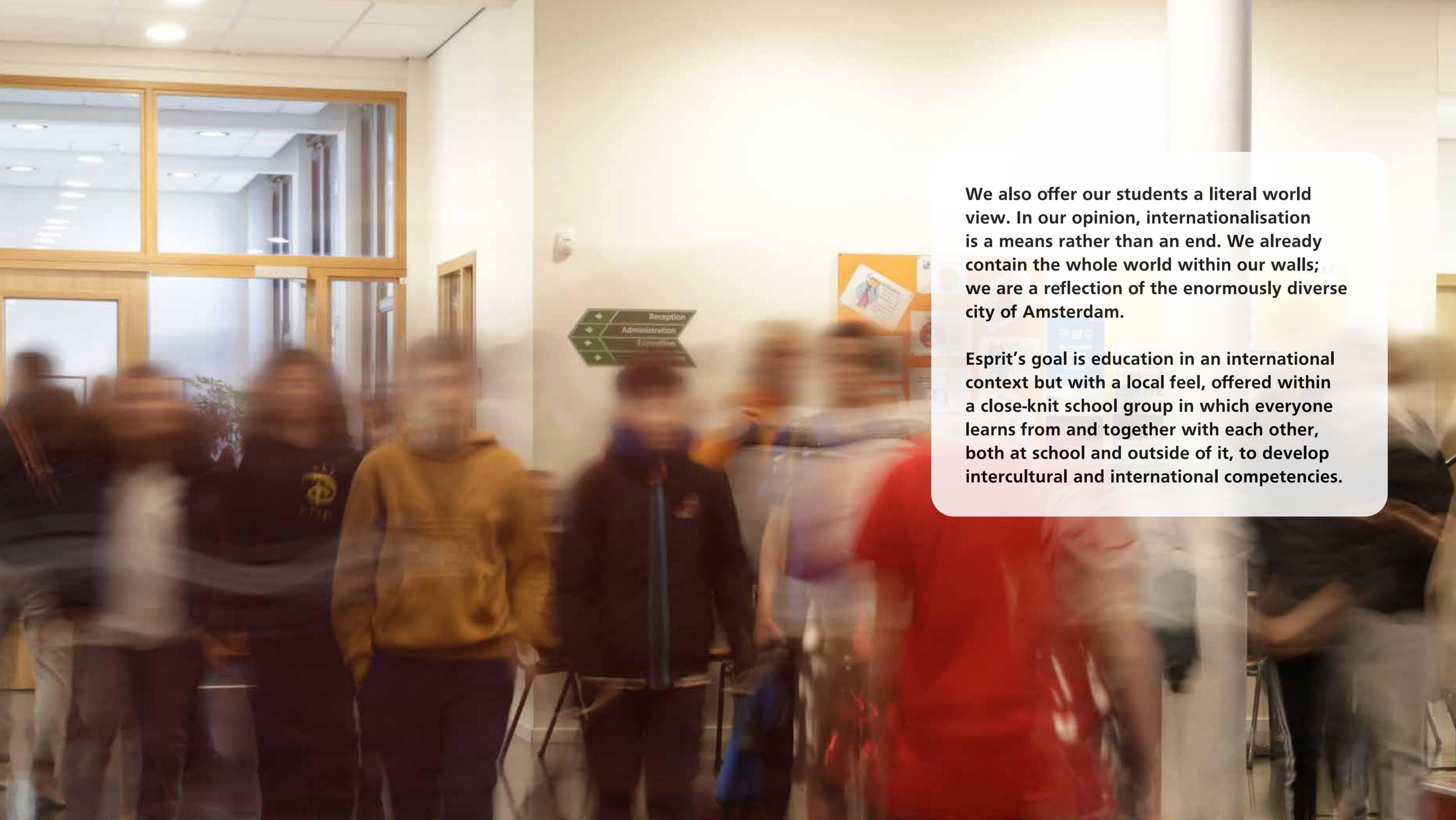
Focal point 1

Hope and possibilities for all students

Esprit Schools work towards creating a sense of hope and possibility for all students. We believe that everyone deserves high-quality education. We set high standards to motivate and inspire students, we offer opportunities, and we are often bilingual or multilingual. We also dare to take a different approach to organisation, for example in the transition from primary to secondary education, deferred selection, a three-year bridging period, and the curriculum. Esprit shows courage, and in doing so, offers possibilities.

There's always an Esprit school where you can feel at home.

We offer a sense of engagement and an inclusive environment that values plurality and diversity. The learning pathways we develop are based on the notion of providing possibilities and offer support and additional guidance where necessary. We also provide frameworks and call on students to adjust their behaviour if required. The relationship that we build with our students enables us to offer opportunities to all.



We also offer our students a literal world view. In our opinion, internationalisation is a means rather than an end. We already contain the whole world within our walls; we are a reflection of the enormously diverse city of Amsterdam.

Esprit's goal is education in an international context but with a local feel, offered within a close-knit school group in which everyone learns from and together with each other, both at school and outside of it, to develop intercultural and international competencies.



Focal point 2

Personal development

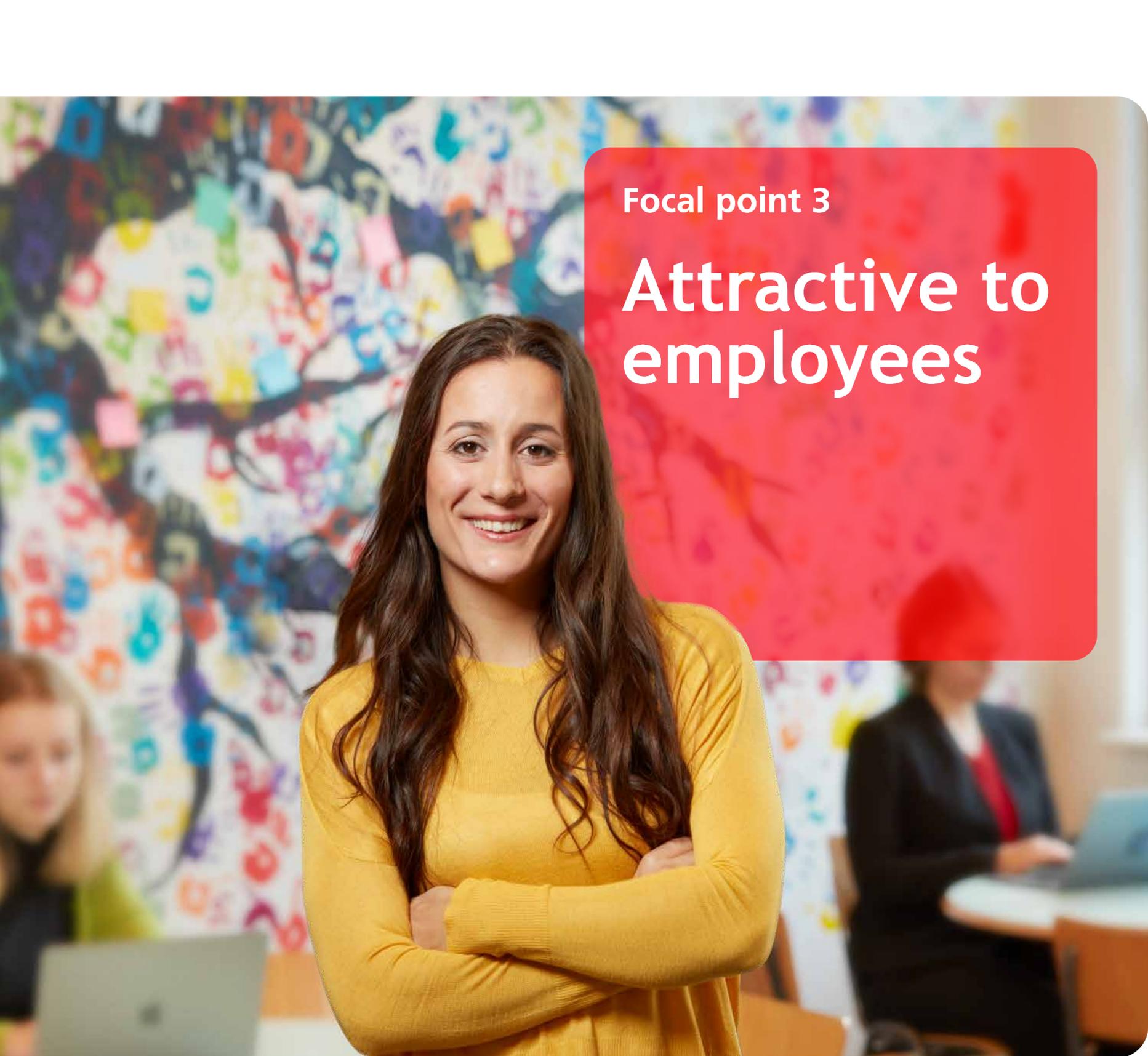
We give our students the space to develop and to be who they are, enabling them to flourish and take their place in society as open-minded global citizens. We stimulate curiosity, self-sufficiency and responsibility, so that students learn to recognise their own talents and those of others. We also encourage students to be brave enough to make mistakes and experience learning from them (therefore developing resilience).

Valuable and meaningful work for all staff

Esprit is a widely varied school group in which close-knit teams work together in a sustainable manner. At Esprit Schools, we work together to forge connections between primary and secondary education, Amsterdam and the world, and between students and learning journeys, with opportunities for all.

Esprit stands for human energy. Our schools employ inspired, creative professionals. We learn from one another through the partnership between our schools. We make and share plans, and create a flow of ideas and people. This contributes to creating a positive school atmosphere, sustainable employability and vitality. Esprit Schools is an inspiring employer that provides you with valuable, meaningful work and the freedom to innovate, and that genuinely appreciates your efforts.





Focal point 3

Attractive to employees

Esprit Schools attracts employees by standing out; employees experience and value the authenticity of Esprit's individuality and determined approach. Esprit is right at home in Amsterdam. We are a socially oriented and innovative school group. Our close-knit teams provide employees with a warm welcome and ensure that they will thoroughly enjoy their work.

The Esprit schools are strongly connected with each other, both professionally (in terms of education development, care, internships, etc.) and on the social level. Under the umbrella of the Esprit Schools, we work together and share our ideas and expertise with one another. We share our highs and lows, and learn from each other's 'mistakes'. By doing so, we grow in kindness and perspective, learn to understand each other's context, and explore what we can or must do better.

Esprit offers an inspiring, innovative and international working environment.

Employees at Esprit receive abundant opportunities for development and professionalisation by means of courses and training through the Esprit Academy, as well as exchanges and transfers between the schools. The considerable variety in our schools means we are able to provide ample opportunities for innovation and cooperation, including between primary and secondary education. We are unique in Amsterdam with respect to this! We also offer career guidance aimed particularly at prospective, starting and early career teachers. Our highest priority is to educate students and lateral transfer trainees, and to provide guidance to starters and early career teachers. Esprit is a training school for both primary and secondary education. At Esprit Schools, you have the opportunity to develop both as an individual and as an employee.

Strong collaborations with our local environment

In order to maintain a broad perspective, we foster connections between our education offer and the world around us. We introduce our students to the city and to everything associated with it – both the beautiful aspects of Amsterdam, and the visible and invisible problems that require solutions. Students learn in and about their environment, about living together and about society. We also pay attention to their homes. By means of excursions, guest lessons and internships, we enable students to discover the world outside the school, while helping them to develop their social and cultural skills.

For us, staying connected to our local environment also means respecting our planet's boundaries. We behave responsibly with respect to the world around us. In fact, a sustainable future is shaped within the education system. At Esprit Schools, we take an integrated approach to the social and ecological aspects of sustainability. Instead of focusing only on increasing the sustainability of our buildings, or sustainability in the curriculum, or the sustainable employability of our staff, we look at all these matters in conjunction with each other.





Focal point 4

Sustainability

Esprit Schools has its own Sustainability Plan through which it works towards achieving the sustainability development goals. We take a broad, cohesive approach by paying attention to:

- **what** we learn – sustainability occupies a permanent place in the curriculum;
- **how** we learn – our pedagogy and didactics are aimed at social-ecological sustainability;
- **where** we learn – we are working towards climate-neutral buildings and circular operations;
- **from** whom we learn – we promote the professional development of our employees; and
- **with** whom we learn – we connect with others around us (e.g. Nieuw Amsterdams Klimaat, a municipal platform by and for Amsterdam residents).

In the coming years, we will be pursuing the above goals by means of actions such as establishing a Teacher Sustainability Network, encouraging students to undertake tasks at or outside of school or to form a 'green team' together, and by developing a long-term sustainability investment plan for our school buildings.

Through professionalisation and participation in networks, we also emphasise development and collaboration. This is not only fun and challenging – it's also something our students are explicitly asking for.

In addition to our physical world, we are increasingly also operating in a digital world. How should we move about in this world, and how do we connect what happens there with the world around us?

At Esprit Schools, curiosity is our major driver in determining how we deal with technological developments. We use the opportunities they give us to strengthen our education, and offer schools the freedom to innovate their approach and offerings with respect to future-oriented skills. Both students and employees can further develop these skills at Esprit Schools.



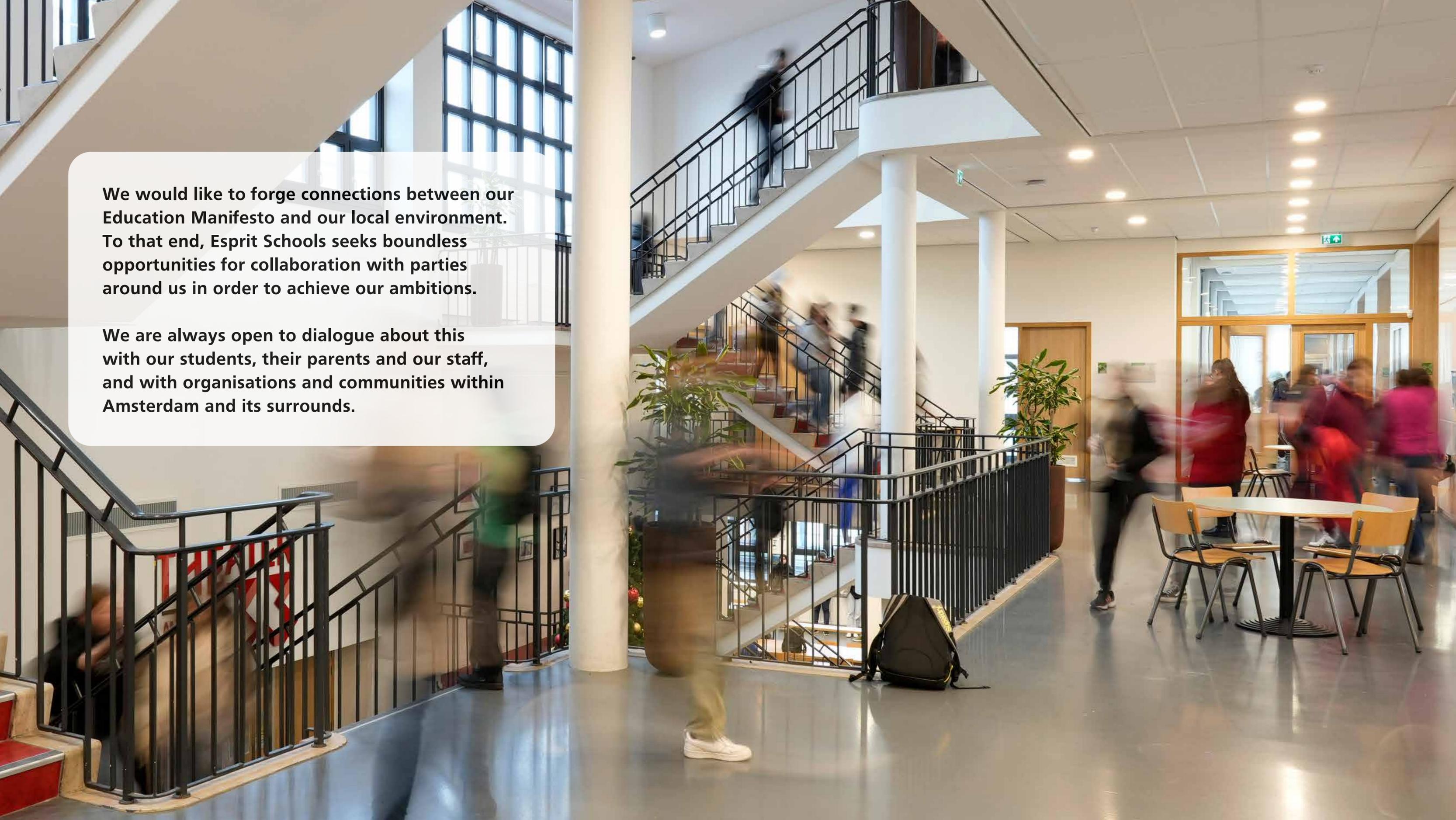
Focal point 5

Navigating the digital world



Esprit understands that the offline and online worlds are continually interacting, and that these worlds reinforce each other. We teach our students and staff to be curious and take responsibility. An open, informed approach ensures the creation of innovative, meaningful connections between the online and offline worlds.

Esprit Schools use the opportunities provided by new, intelligent technologies to support and enrich education. We equip students and employees to make educated choices in the use of devices and artificial intelligence, and to appreciate the value of the content offered.



We would like to forge connections between our Education Manifesto and our local environment. To that end, Esprit Schools seeks boundless opportunities for collaboration with parties around us in order to achieve our ambitions.

We are always open to dialogue about this with our students, their parents and our staff, and with organisations and communities within Amsterdam and its surrounds.



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