



School plan PO/VO 2025-2028

*Keeping the good, improving what needs
improving and excelling in what
works*



BRIN number DENISE Primary Education: 31LK
BRIN number DENISE Secondary Education: 17YS02

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General information

The New Esprit International School (DENISE) is a school for primary (IEYC/IPC) and secondary education (IMYC, mavo, havo, and International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB-DP).

DENISE is part of Esprit Schools (<http://www.espritscholen.nl/home/>) and, since 2018, IB-World School (www.ibo.org).

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NOTES.

In this school plan, the child is generally referred to in the "he" form. In addition, reference is made only to parents. This is done for the sake of readability.

Of course, we hope you can also read these words, if necessary, as "they," "them," and "parent(s)" or "caregiver(s).

Foreword

Before you is DENISE's new School Plan 2025-2028, in which we set out our course for the coming years. This school plan serves as a guide for our joint efforts to further strengthen the quality of our education. DENISE is in the consolidation phase of school development. This means that no more major changes are taking place, but we are focusing on retaining what works well, improving what can be improved, and excelling in those things that have proven successful. The past 10 years have laid a solid foundation for high-quality Dutch and international education for students aged 4 to 18. Our mission, vision and motto remain unchanged.

The school plan is a document in which we elaborate our ambitions and goals in different areas using our mission and vision as a basis. We begin with a general description of our school, outlining the core values and profile of DENISE. Then we elaborate on specific topics, namely:

- Educational offerings
- Views on guidance and development
- Pedagogical and didactic practices
- School climate and safety
- Human Resources
- Quality assurance and culture

For each of these components, we describe the current situation and daily practices within our school. Following this, from the various members of the DENISE Community - staff, students and parents - we provide a nuanced picture of what is going well and where there are areas for improvement. For this purpose, a questionnaire was distributed to all employees and focus groups were held with students, parents, staff and school management.

Each chapter related to the above topics concludes with an overview of DENISE's ambitions and goals for this section. These ambitions and goals are aimed at further developing our strengths and addressing any challenges so that we can provide the best education to our students. The goals for the next four years are described specifically in [Chapter 8](#).

We would like to thank all the individuals who contributed to the creation of this school plan. Their input and involvement were invaluable in shaping the future of our school.

We look forward to working with all members of the DENISE Community to further develop our education in the coming years!

On behalf of the school board of DENISE,

Jenno van der Wal, acting rector
Amanja Doek, acting vice rector

Links to important documents

General

[School Guide 2024-2025 Esprit Schools education manifesto](#)

Policy documents

[School Plan 21-25](#)

[Admissions Policy Assessment Policy](#)

[Language Policy](#)

[School Learning Support - Inclusion - Diversity Policy \(support policy\) Academic](#)

[Integrity Policy](#)

[Community Code](#)

[Professional status](#)

School Protocols

[Anti-Bullying Protocol](#)

[Camera surveillance protocol](#)

[Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Reporting Code Protocol Absenteeism Protocol](#)

[Protocol fill out and discuss report VO Parro \(po\)](#)

[Travel protocol excursions and trips abroad](#)

Educational Documents

[Explanation Report Card VO](#)

[Explanation Report Card PO](#)

[Examination regulations](#)

[PTA - Program of Examination and Completion 2023-2024](#)

Curriculum and class schedule

[Curriculum Landscape](#)

[The road to the IB \(intake gr12\)](#)

[IB evaluation visit February](#)

[2024](#)

1. Mission, Mission, Vision and motto

1.1 Mission

In 2014, DENISE started with the mission to provide high-quality international and Dutch education to students between the ages of 4-18. DENISE was founded on the vision that every child regardless of origin, skin color, language, gender, culture or religion has equal opportunities for a good school career in the Netherlands. We offer through our vision, approach and structure, opportunities for newcomers to obtain a diploma in a good school climate and to be able to make a meaningful contribution to society. The goal is a good reception and support of newcomers in the Netherlands and access to (inter)national education. In this way, we want to maximize the chances of success for newcomers in the Netherlands. At our school there are internationals in the broadest sense of the word: from newcomers to Amsterdam students, whether born in the Netherlands or not. We are a school with students from more than 75 different countries.

Our mission is to create flexible educational pathways and offer a diversity of content through which students integrate into Amsterdam/Dutch society and discover who they are, what they can do, what touches them, what they dare to do, what they learn from/with each other, what motivates them and earn a diploma that best suits their ambition and ability. Communication, safety and respect are at the heart of our education.

1.2 Social mission

In the Netherlands, common values about education are laid down in the Primary Education Act (Wet op het PO/VO), namely: "education: (a) is partly based on the assumption that pupils grow up in a pluralistic society, (b) is partly aimed at promoting active citizenship and social integration, and (c) is partly aimed at ensuring that pupils have knowledge of and become acquainted with different backgrounds and cultures of peers." Our educational concept provides a context in which the student meets a wide diversity of students, teachers and support staff every day.

1.3 Vision

Our vision of education consists of six principles:

1. **Core values:** At DENISE, we shape learning by focusing on responsibility, connectedness and open-mindedness.
2. **Learning in and from a super-diverse community:** Students from around the world are welcome to join us and we learn from and with each other. We work together and try to understand the world from multiple points of view.
3. **Perspective:** We work with continuous learning lines for students aged 4 to 18. All DENISE staff ensure a smooth start for all students who are

enter a new class. We feel it is important to always create a perspective for the student that motivates.

4. **Language acquisition is the starting point:** Students learn in Dutch and English. In addition, they put their mother tongues to use in preparation for an English or Dutch-language diploma program.
5. **Differentiation by age and levels:** Students are in heterogeneous classes through grade 3. We use assessment tasks as a tool to learn from and there is space/time for student (social-emotional) growth.
6. **Shared Sustainable Future:** We want to teach our students knowledge and awareness of sustainability of themselves, the school, the environment and the world.

1.4 Motto

Our mission and vision come together in our motto: "Progress by knowing where you came from."

1.5 Education Manifesto Esprit Schools

Esprit Schools, the school board under which DENISE falls, has formulated five focal points in its [Education Manifesto](#). The above principles of DENISE's vision are directly related to some of the focus points of the Education Manifesto. Table 1 shows the relationship between the Education Manifesto and the tenets of DENISE's vision.

Focus point Esprit Schools education manifesto	DENISE vision
Hope and perspective for all students	<p>Perspective: We work with continuous learning lines for students ages 4 to 18. All DENISE staff ensure a smooth start for all students entering a new class. We believe it is important to always create a perspective for the student that motivates.</p>
Personal formation	<p>Core values: At DENISE, we shape learning around the core values of responsibility, connection and open-mindedness.</p> <p>Learning in and from a super-diverse community: Students from around the world are welcome to join us and we learn from and with each other. We work together and try to understand the world from multiple points of view.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Shared Sustainable Future: We want to teach our students knowledge and awareness of sustainability of themselves, the school, the environment and the world.</p>

Table 1. Overview of Esprit Schools Educational Manifesto in relation to the principles of DENISE's vision.

2. Description of the organization

DENISE is part of Esprit Scholen and is a Dutch public and public school. DENISE receives funding from the state, along with municipal contributions and subsidies. DENISE has a voluntary parental contribution for both PO and VO. The daily management of DENISE lies with the board of directors and the department leaders. Together they form the school management. The school management, teaching staff (OP) and education support staff (OOP) provide education to students aged 4 through 18. Figure 1 shows the organizational structure of DENISE. Each department is headed by a department leader. The OOP team is led by the vice principal. Every employee of DENISE is a member of a department. With the exception of the language program and the diploma program mavo/havo, each department has a curriculum coordinator. Together with the department leader of the respective program, they steer for quality and continuous learning lines. The department leaders, curriculum coordinators and heads of the subject sections together form the curriculum committee. In varying composition, the committee meets to design, evaluate and adjust the curriculum.

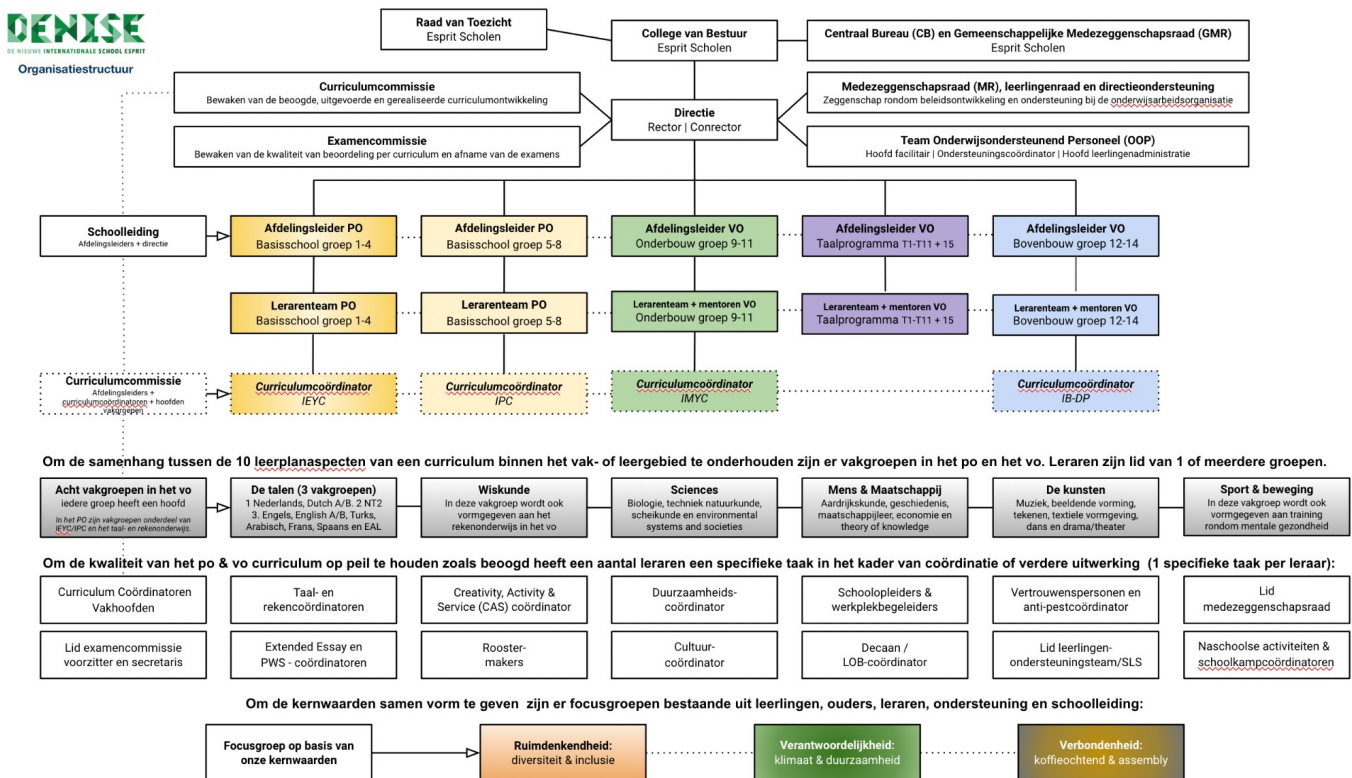


Figure 1. DENISE organizational structure.

3. Methodology school plan

This chapter describes the approach used to prepare the school plan. The methodology focuses on mapping the current situation, identifying areas for improvement, and formulating ambitions and goals for the next four years. Policy documents, internal and external research, and the insights of the DENISE community were used in preparing the school plan.

3.1. Description methodology of the current situation

In describing the current situation at school, existing policy documents were used primarily. These documents contain policies on education, support, assessment, admission, personnel policy, quality assurance, safety and school climate. These policy documents were analyzed to get an overview of the school's principles and frameworks.

3.2. Description of what is going well and what could be better

To get a picture of the strengths and areas for improvement within DENISE, a wide range of data collection was used.

3.2.1. Questionnaires

A questionnaire was administered to all employees of the school. This questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions and was aimed at gaining insights into the school's daily functioning and employee satisfaction. The open-ended questions provided an opportunity to share specific suggestions for improvement. The questionnaire results were analyzed to identify which topics repeatedly emerged as areas of concern or strengths of the school.

3.2.2. Focus groups

To gain deeper insights, several focus groups were organized:

- **Staff:** Two focus groups with staff provided an opportunity to delve further into topics such as pedagogical and didactic practices, student supervision, personnel policies and overall school culture. These sessions provided qualitative insights on what is going well and what could be improved from the team's perspective.
- **Students:** A focus group with students focused on their experiences with teaching, guidance and the overall atmosphere at school. Students shared their opinions on how they experience learning and what they think could be improved.
- **Parents:** Parents participated in a focus group to share their experiences about school safety, curriculum and the support their children receive, among other things.
- **School leadership:** School leadership organized its own focus group, discussing input from the other focus groups.

This gave the leadership a clear picture of the key areas for improvement that were raised by the DENISE community.

3.2.3. Satisfaction surveys

The results of the periodically conducted satisfaction surveys of parents, students and staff were also included in the analysis. These quantitative data complemented the qualitative feedback and provided an overview of satisfaction with various aspects, such as educational offerings, guidance, safety and communication.

3.2.4. Research by Education Inspectorate and International Baccalaureate (IB) Visitation

The findings of both the IB visitation and the Education Inspectorate were an important part of the school's evaluation. Both surveys gave an objective picture of the school's performance in various aspects, including the quality of the curriculum, the implementation of the curriculum, the guidance of students and internal quality assurance. These external evaluations revealed both strengths and areas for development

3.2.6. Analysis of the collected data.

After collecting all the data, the results from the questionnaires, focus groups, satisfaction surveys, the IB visit and the inspection survey were analyzed. This included only the topics that came up multiple times in both the questionnaires and the focus groups and external surveys. These repeated themes form the basis for of what is going well within the school and what can be improved.

3.3. Description of ambitions and goals

Based on the collected input, the school leadership formulated the main ambitions and goals for the next four years in a separate focus group. This used the insights that emerged from the various internal and external sources.

The ambitions and goals focus on further strengthening the quality of education, improving student guidance, promoting a positive school climate, investing in staff development, and tightening the quality assurance and structure at DENISE. Attention was paid to maintaining the school's strengths, such as the high level of satisfaction with the curriculum, the guidance of students by the support team, and school safety.

4. Education at DENISE

4.1 Programs and curriculum: basic skills and educational offerings

4.1.1 Description of current situation

4.1.1.1 School Structure

To remove language barriers experienced by newcomers, we have grouped our education around five programs for ages 4 to 18 (sometimes 19 or 20). Learning Dutch is necessary to obtain the mavo or havo or IB diploma. It is not yet possible in the Netherlands to take the final exam at mavo, havo or vwo in English. Instead of the vwo, DENISE offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB-DP). This is an international diploma program at the vwo level. With an IB diploma, students are prepared for further education at universities in the Netherlands and abroad. The school structure of DENISE is shown in Figure 2.

A description of all programs follows.

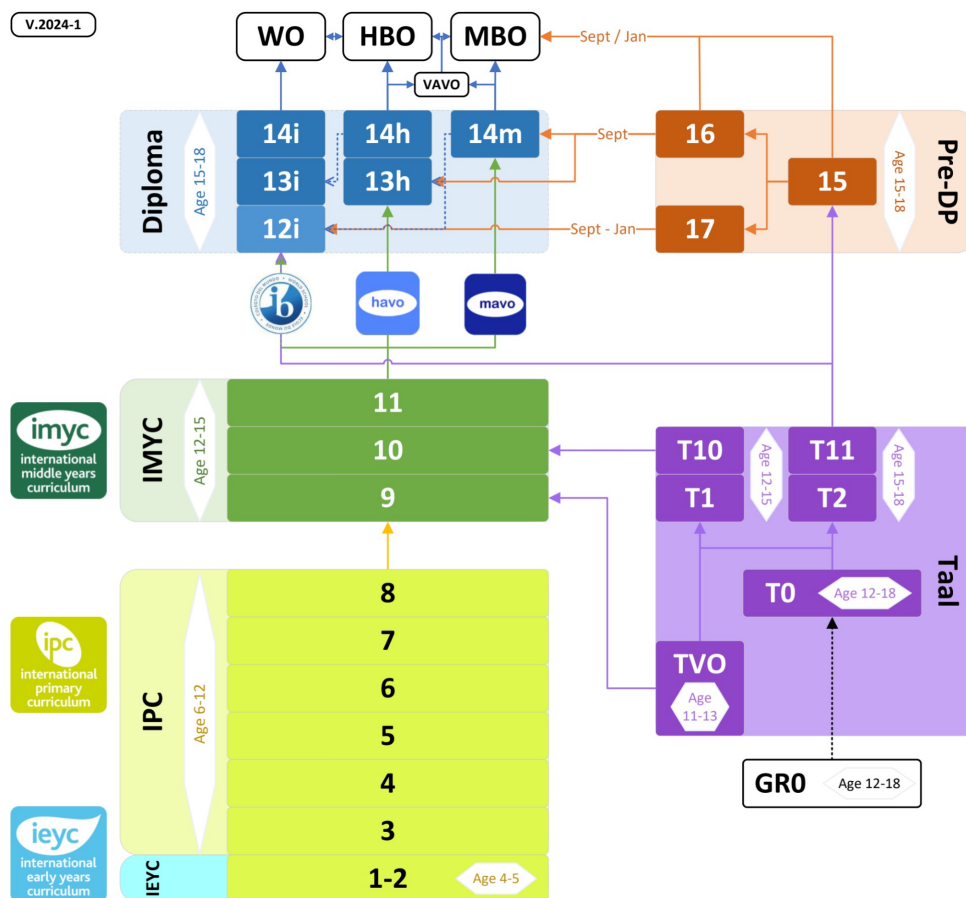


Figure 2. School structure DENISE.

4.1.1.2 IEYC/IPC primary - Groups 1-8 and IMYC secondary - Groups 9, 10, 11

DENISE Primary is a bilingual (Dutch-English) program for primary education. The program in group 1 and 2 is based on the International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC). From group 3 we work with the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) which is formed around the core objectives for Dutch primary education. The lower secondary school (group 9, 10 and 11) also offers a bilingual (Dutch-English) program based on the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC), which is formed around the core objectives for the junior grades of Dutch secondary education.

The IEYC/IPC and the IMYC are challenging, engaging, internationally oriented, concept-based curricula designed specifically for the unique learning needs of primary and secondary students. The IPC and IMYC help students make meaning of their environment by linking subject knowledge to a big issue, or "Big Idea." A Big Idea helps students learn to better understand the world in context. In both PO and undergraduate VO, five Units of Big Ideas are central to each grade; all subjects work from the Big Idea. In PO, a Milepost works on same theme. There are three Mileposts in the PO. Milepost 1 are groups 3 and 4, Milepost consists of groups 5 and 6, and groups 7 and 8 make up Milepost 3. Learning is done using 7 steps from the learning cycle. This includes the development of basic subject knowledge and -skills that students need for functioning in society (general development), progression to secondary education and ultimately being ready to start a diploma program.

Students work on a solid foundation of knowledge and develop skills needed for research, for presenting and for using a range of media images to present the learning process. In addition, the program focuses on personal education and (world) citizenship. This occurs throughout all lessons and particularly during the mentoring class and in extracurricular activities. Each unit begins with an "Entry Point" in which students are introduced to the theme and concludes with an "Exit Point. During the Exit Point, students are asked to demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned and what it means to them personally and in a real world context. Planning and producing this activity provides students with opportunities to creatively share the learning with peers, parents and teachers and also reflect on their own learning. Learning with and from each other are features of education at DENISE.

4.1.1.3 Group 0 and language classes T0 to T11; (12-18 years)

Students 12 and older who speak little or no Dutch begin in Group 0. The teaching team for this group consists of both DENISE and Mundus teachers (also Esprit Schools). Together they determine the most appropriate level in terms of education for the newcomers. This is done by gathering information about the student through learning activities, conversations with parents and student, testing and observing the student's behavior in the classroom. After group 0, the student either goes to Mundus College (basic/framework training, practical training) or to DENISE (vmbo-t, havo or IBDP). A newcomer spends a maximum of two to six weeks in this starter group.

In order to create maximum opportunities for every student, we have developed a separate and intensive language program (see purple block in the school structure Figure 2). This language program is for pupils aged 11 years and older who do not have sufficient command of the Dutch language to receive an education in any of the other programs.

We distinguish different level groups:

- TVO - a class for students aged 11-13 with no to beginning knowledge of Dutch, ERK level 0-A2;
- T0: a class for students aged 12-18 who have no knowledge of Dutch, ERK level 0-A1;
- T1: a class for students aged 12-14 with students who have a beginning knowledge of Dutch, ERK level: A1-A2;
- T2: a class for students aged 15-18 with students who have a beginning knowledge of Dutch, ERK level: A1-A2;
- T10: a class for students aged 12-14 with students almost ready to enter a program in grade 9, 10 or 11, ERK level A2-B1;
- T11: a class for students aged 15-18 with students who are almost ready to take a program in grade 11, 12 or 15, ERK level A2-B1.

In the language class program, a pilot class called "TVO" has been launched since school year 2024-2025. TVO is the abbreviation of Taaltraject Voortgezet Onderwijs. The TVO class is intended for young students between the ages of 11-13, who have been in the Netherlands for a short time. Primary education (po) has already been completed in the country of origin or entry into a PO class is no longer appropriate. A class for pupils who would benefit from a soft landing in secondary education, who are better able to learn in a predictable, low-stimulation class. More information can be found in our admissions policy, July 2024 version.

The faster a student acquires the Dutch language, the faster a flow to the next level group is possible. Thus, there is a permanent flow of students within the school. This offers advantages, but also disadvantages. The advantage is that there is always room for a newcomer in Amsterdam. The disadvantage, however, is that the flow through brings with it a sense of unrest. Consequently, there is also a permanent pressure on the teaching schedule, finding suitable teachers and the ability of colleagues to differentiate in the language classes. There can also be pressure on group formation, group cohesion and social climate.

4.1.1.4 Pre-DP - Group 15, 16, 17 (ages 15-18)

The pre-DP consists of grade 15 and is a preparation for the diploma program for students aged 15 and older. These are students who have had an interrupted educational career for a variety of reasons (usually due to residence abroad). Pupils for whom a diploma program is not an option (because of age or a language or educational disadvantage) also follow this program which is a preparation for vocational or adult education (mbo or vavo).

4.1.1.5 Diploma program - Group 12, 13, 14 (15-18 years)

The diploma program distinguishes three different graduation programs to provide tailored services to our students after completing the IMYC or pre-DP program. Since 2015, we have been providing in a one-year mavo diploma program. Since 2019, we also offer a two-year havo diploma program. In addition, since 2018 we have offered the IB DP (Diploma Program). This English-language program trains for scientific education. The mavo is a one-year vmbo-t program (14m), the havo is a two-year diploma program (13h, 14h) and the IB DP takes 3 years at DENISE (12i, 13i, 14i).

4.1.1.6 Content education

DENISE's five programs meet the core objectives for grades 1-8 in elementary school and the core objectives in lower secondary education for grades 9-15. The 58 core objectives for primary and secondary education are not specified by level in the Netherlands. This situation leaves room for the school to offer students a mixed curriculum for the first three years according to the principles of the three-year broad bridge class.

Learning goals are formulated for each subject and monitored by our curriculum committee. Students have one school year (September-July) to work on these goals. At various times, teachers assess how students are performing on these learning goals based on their results. The teacher uses a variety of assessment tools including tests, presentations, essays, extensive practical work, projects, portfolios and oral work. Three times a year for IMYC and DP and twice a year for PO and Language, the teacher determines the student's level in a report. The [Assessment Policy](#) describes the agreements, expectations and explanations for how testing is done at DENISE.

All learning objectives can be [found](#) through the [curriculum landscape](#). A learning objective indicates what we want to achieve with our education. A learning objective specifies clearly and concretely what one needs to learn in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Working on and achieving learning goals is important for three reasons:

- 1) It helps the student discover his or her interests.
- 2) It promotes an understanding of how society works and how the student can contribute to it.
- 3) It prepares the student for the diploma program.

There are certain stages in which a minimum level of success is required to advance to the next school year.

These stages are at the end of language classes, at the end of elementary school (grade 8), the end of the undergraduate program (grade 11) and at the end of the pre-IB (grades 15-17 and 12i). Admission requirements are outlined in the [Admissions Policy](#).

An assessment for admission is required prior to the start of each degree program. An overview of all relevant documents related to the curriculum at DENISE can be found in the curriculum landscape.

4.1.2 What goes right?

Parents in PO appreciate the holistic approach within IEYC/IPC, where subjects are offered in an integrated way. They also see field trips and assembly as essential for social interaction and hands-on learning experiences. Teachers in PO indicate that we are meeting the core objectives, with more consistency between subjects, which makes teaching more effective and improves support for students.

Both parents and students cite the dedicated teachers and the clear structure of lessons, rules and materials as valuable elements. These provide a stable and predictable learning environment. In addition, the focus on diversity and connectedness within our bilingual community (Dutch and English) is seen as a great asset, as it promotes respect and inclusion.

The homework-free policy in primary education (PO) and the offer of creative subjects such as drama, visual education and music in both PO and VO, are perceived very positively by parents and students. This contributes to students' broad development and promotes their well-being.

Secondary education (VO) teachers appreciate the broad and rich curriculum, with special attention to citizenship and flexibility. This enables students to reach their full potential, with extra support for NT2 students and in subjects such as English and math.

4.1.3 What could do better?

Parents and students indicate that some students in both primary and secondary education need more challenge. According to them, this challenge is insufficiently provided at present, which sometimes leads to a lack of motivation among this group of students. The current model with three bridging years is perceived by some students as too long. They would benefit from earlier differentiation, possibly as early as grade 11, to better focus on their level and motivation.

In addition, there is a demand for a wider range of languages. In addition to English, Dutch and Spanish, parents and students express interest in additional languages, such as French in the

IMYC and IB program. It is also considered desirable to offer the subjects within Science and Man and Society separately.

Parents request a more diverse offering within history lessons in IPC to provide a broader perspective on historical events, not just covering the Eurocentric perspective. Students would like the opportunity to also choose economics, for example, within the IB-DP program.

Both parents and staff emphasize the importance of digital skills for students, without losing sight of the importance of handwriting. With increasing digitalization, it is crucial that students learn to safely and effectively use IT devices and online information so that they are well prepared for the digital future. At the same time, developing good handwriting remains important for motor development, concentration and memory. Maintaining and improving handwriting is therefore seen as essential for students' broad development.

Parents see physical education (PE) as an important part of students' well-being. There is a desire for more classes in this area.

Both teachers and parents underline the importance of sustainability in the curriculum by making sustainability policies concrete can help raise awareness about the issue among students.

Students perceive the transition from the IMYC to the 12i program as challenging, especially in the areas of questioning and developing critical thinking skills. There is also a need for a smooth transition to other DP programs, with the latter programs suddenly having a strong focus on grades, according to students.

Teachers see room for improvement in the continuous learning lines between primary and secondary education, especially between Milepost 3 (PO) and the IMYC. In addition, the connection of the Language Classes with the IMYC requires additional attention, according to both teachers and students.

Finally, an important focus for teachers is to make education more visible within the IMYC. The method used in primary education for the IPC is cited as a good example in this regard.

4.1.4 Ambitions and goals

For DENISE's school plan, the ambitions and goals related to educational offerings focus on further developing and improving the quality of our education, focusing on sustainability, citizenship, digital skills and continuous learning lines.

4.1.4.1 Ensuring continuous learning lines

An important goal is to guarantee continuous learning lines within the subjects by having the subject sections/Mileposts coordinate better internally and among themselves. Through more intensive cooperation and coordination between the various learning years and subject areas, we want to ensure that the content and structure of the educational offerings are optimally aligned with each other.

connect. This will not only enhance students' learning but also enrich their learning experience. The curriculum committee, consisting of the department leaders, curriculum coordinators and department chairs, is working on this with the team. We continue to develop the positioning and responsibility of department chairs and departments.

4.1.4.2 Strengthening sustainability and citizenship in the curriculum

We strive to incorporate sustainability and citizenship more explicitly and purposefully into the curriculum. These themes are essential for the development of our students into responsible global citizens. To achieve this, we want to strengthen the role of coordinators (sustainability and ICC) and put them in a better position to develop and implement policies aimed at integrating these themes into all areas of learning to help students develop competencies in these areas. This includes a clear focus on creating a cohesive program that promotes sustainability and active citizenship across the curriculum.

4.1.4.3 Digital skills and handwriting education in balance

With the proliferation of digital learning tools, it is essential that digital skills be better described and embedded in the curriculum. There is a particular focus on the use of AI and how to deal with it. This will also be done in conjunction with handwriting instruction and writing skills, paying attention to the balance between the digital world and traditional skills. The goal is to make students both digitally and writing proficient so that they are prepared for the demands of modern society.

4.1.4.4 Explore expansion of subject offerings in IMYC and DP

We examine whether the range of subjects within both the IMYC (International Middle Years Curriculum) and the DP (Diploma Program) can or should be expanded. We are also looking specifically at the choice and diversity of modern foreign languages, among other things, and are looking to collaborate with other Esprit schools. We also want to investigate whether it is possible for students in the mavo and have diploma program to take exams at a higher level. We want our students to have access to a broader spectrum of subjects so that they can make an informed choice that matches their interests and future plans. This is also expected to increase success rates.

4.1.4.5 Early start of the PTA in group 11

To smooth the transition to the DP for mavo and have students and to increase urgency among students, we are introducing the Program of Examination and Completion (PTA) in grade 11. This will ensure that students become familiar with the structure and expectations of the DP earlier, which will strengthen their preparation and self-confidence. It is also expected that this will also increase pass rates.

4.2 Pedagogical and didactic acting

4.2.1 Description of current situation

The DENISE viewing guide (Appendix 1) describes what is expected of teachers with respect to pedagogical and didactic practices. The DENISE viewing guide focuses on important aspects of effective teaching, such as classroom management, teacher-student interaction, activating didactics, language teaching and the degree of differentiation within the lesson. This viewing guide helps provide targeted feedback and offer teachers insight into their strengths and areas for development. Department leaders visit a teacher's lesson at least once couple of years. Using the DENISE guide, feedback is given and further discussion is held on what and how to develop further.

4.2.2 What goes right?

The student satisfaction survey shows that secondary education (VO) scores above the benchmark when looking at teaching (see Figure 3).

There is a sense among teachers that lessons generally go well. Teachers at DENISE are engaged, creative and flexible, and feel responsible for their students. Moreover, the philosophies of the IMYC and the IB program align with the desire to promote a growth mindset, inquiry-based learning and a holistic approach to the child within the learning process.

4.2.3 What could do better?

The student satisfaction survey shows that primary education (PO) scores below the benchmark in the area of teaching (see Figure 4).

Teachers in PO and VO signal that there is variation in the way colleagues tailor their pedagogical and didactic approaches to students. This variation manifests itself in different pedagogical and didactic approaches, which may result in different learning experiences for students. In particular, new teachers at DENISE sometimes have difficulty distancing themselves from traditional teaching methods, such as an emphasis on grades, classroom teaching and results according to teachers. This can be to the detriment of the room for differentiation, which does not sufficiently take into account differences in students' language level, background and culture. In addition, teachers question whether they have sufficient resources and skills to differentiate effectively in the super-diverse classrooms of PO and IMYC. In many cases, teachers in VO have only one or two class hours to convey the material, which limits their ability to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Stellingen Scholenopdekaart: Tevredenheid		Score	BM
1	Helpen leraren je om je best te doen op school?	7,56	6,94 
2	Letten je leraren op wat je goed en niet zo goed kunt?	7,21	6,18 
3	Ben je tevreden over wat je leert op school?	6,84	6,26 
4	Doe je verschillende dingen in een les?	6,97	6,05 
5	Werken computers, laptops of tablets goed op je school?	8,41	7,27 
6	Ben je tevreden met het gebruik van computers of digibord in de les?	8,67	7,81 
7	Bespreken leraren wel eens het nieuws in de lessen? (Bijvoorbeeld dingen uit het (jeugd)journaal, een nieuws website of uit de krant.)	5,51	4,09 
8	Is dat wat je leert op school nuttig voor als je van school af gaat?	6,47	5,52 
9	Ben je tevreden over de extra activiteiten buiten de les? (Bijvoorbeeld schoolreisje, sportdag of bezoek aan museum.)	6,58	6,15 
10	Helpt de school je met het kiezen van een volgende studie of werk?	6,33	6,17 
11	Kunnen je leraren goed uitleggen?	6,96	6,42 
12	Ben je tevreden over je mentor/coach?	8,41	7,95 
13	Krijg je hulp als je problemen hebt met leren?	7,33	6,86 
14	Vertellen je leraren je duidelijk hoe je een opdracht of toets hebt gemaakt?	6,88	6,26 
15	Vertelt de school leerlingen de belangrijke dingen die op school gebeuren? (Bijvoorbeeld nieuws over activiteiten, regels of lesuitval.)	7,35	6,24 
16	Doet de school iets met de mening of ideeën van leerlingen? (Bijvoorbeeld via een leerlingenraad kunnen leerlingen inspraak hebben.)	6,24	5,45 

Figure 3. Student satisfaction survey VO 2024.

Stellingen De lessen op school		Score	BM
1	Ben je tevreden over wat je leert op deze school?	7,75	8,06
2	Vind je de regels op school duidelijk?	8,10	8,16
3	Ben je tevreden over de uitleg van je juf of meester?	7,89	8,36
4	Vertelt je juf of meester je duidelijk wat je goed of fout doet?	7,63	8,17
5	Helpt je juf of meester je goed als dat nodig is?	8,40	8,59

Figure 4. Pupil satisfaction survey PO 2024.

4.2.4 Ambitions and goals

For the school plan in the area of pedagogy and didactics, we focus on further professionalizing education, spearheaded by differentiation, the use of the DENISE curriculum and strong language teaching. These ambitions and goals ensure a learning environment in which every student is optimally supported in his or her development, with special attention to students who need more challenge.

4.2.4.1 More and better differentiation, focusing on challenging learning objectives

One of our main ambitions is to differentiate even more and better in our education. We want every student, regardless of his or her level, to receive appropriate support and challenge. This means that teachers respond to the diverse needs of students, with specific attention to those who need more challenge. We strive to provide these students with enriching and deepening learning materials,

so that they can reach their full potential. Differentiation focuses not only on students who need extra guidance, but also on those who can actually work faster or at a higher level. In this way, we create an inclusive and stimulating learning environment for all.

4.2.4.2 Structural use of the DENISE viewing guide through Quality Schools

To clarify what is expected of teachers in terms of pedagogical and teaching practices, the structural use of the DENISE viewing guide through Quality Schools will be central. The viewing guide will be revised to provide a clear framework for effective teaching practices and enable teachers to evaluate and improve their own actions. Using this tool regularly ensures consistency in our teaching and gives teachers concrete tools to further professionalize their teaching. The viewing guide helps not only to ensure quality, but also to promote reflection and development within the teaching team.

4.2.4.3 Language teaching as a central element in our education

In line with our vision for education, language teaching remains a central pillar within the school. We are convinced that language proficiency is the basis for success in all subjects and developmental areas. Therefore, we continue to invest in strengthening language teaching, both within language classes and in other subjects.

Teachers are encouraged to teach language-consciously and to actively contribute to the language development of their students, regardless of the subject they teach. This means providing integrated language instruction and guiding students in their language skills at all levels so that they become stronger in expressing their thoughts and ideas both orally and in writing. Professionalization of teachers in language teaching is offered regularly.

4.3 Views on development and guidance

4.3.1 Description of current situation

4.3.1.1 View development

At various times, teachers assess how students are performing on the learning objectives based on their results. The teacher uses a variety of assessment tools, including tests, presentations, essays, extensive practical work, projects, portfolios and oral work. In November, March and June, the teacher determines the student's grade level in a report. All learning objectives are included in the Curriculum Book. A learning objective indicates what we want to achieve with our education. A learning objective specifies clearly and concretely what a student needs to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills.

Working on and achieving learning goals is important for three reasons:

- 1) It helps the student discover his or her interests.
- 2) It promotes an understanding of how society works and how the student can contribute to it.
- 3) It prepares the student for the diploma program.

Every student basically moves on to the next grade in a new school year. However, there are certain stages in which a minimum level of success is required to advance to the next school year. These stages are at the end of language classes, at the end of elementary school (grade 8), the end of the undergraduate program (grade 11), at the end of the Career Program (grade 15-17) and at the end of grade 12i . In the PO, parents receive a report twice a year. In VO, they receive reports three times a year.

4.3.1.2 Guidance

Some students need support during their school career. Within the student's development process, we match the educational and support needs as much as possible. This happens whenever possible in the classroom and always in collaboration with student and parents. Support thus looks different for each student, but is as much as possible action-oriented. In order to provide good classroom support, we have a maximum number of 24 students.

At our school, action-oriented work is reflected in the following roadmap:

1. Identification of educational support needs of the pupil by teachers and mentors. There is differentiation (group-wide) by level, pace and assignments appropriate to the development and needs of the student.
2. There is differentiation (group-wide) by level, pace and assignments appropriate to the development and needs of the student. A plan of action can be drawn up with parents if necessary that includes briefly described goals and agreements.

3. An action plan or Development Perspective Plan (OPP) is drawn up together with parents and any external stakeholders in which goals are set and agreements are made. This is regularly evaluated.
4. OPP has been drawn up together with parents and external partners are involved. In the OPP, goals are set and agreements are made about implementation. The implementation is intensive and is mostly done by external partners. Evaluation takes place regularly (at least every 6 weeks) with student, parents, teacher/mentor, internal supervisor/support coordinator, department leader and external partners.
5. We ask the Collaborative to look with us and give advice on where support can be provided. Usually this is a specialized form of education, for example (secondary) special education (V)(SO) or special primary education (SBO).

We try to involve parents as early as possible so that they can participate in helping their child. Also, if parents themselves have concerns about their child, we would like them to share these with school. Parents can best indicate this to the mentor/group teacher. The mentor/group teacher can then properly determine how best to support the student in the classroom. If more support or knowledge is needed, the teacher/mentor will contact the internal supervisor/support coordinator. Parents may then be invited to further discuss their concerns if necessary. Parents can also seek help themselves from, for example, the family doctor or the Parent and Child Team in their district.

Our support policy and roles within the DENISE support team are described in [the School Support Profile](#).

4.3.2 What goes right?

Parents report that they like their children's reports, mainly because of the clear and valuable feedback texts that inform them well about their child's progress. These texts not only provide insight into the grades, but also detail the student's learning and personal development.

In addition, satisfaction survey results show that students in both PO and VO perceive the extra support they receive as positive. Support is rated at or above the benchmark by students in both education levels, indicating effective support that is responsive to their learning and development needs.

Employees at DENISE appreciate the dedication and professionalism of the support team. This team plays a crucial role in providing students with appropriate support, contributing to their growth both socially-emotionally and academically. The collaboration between staff and the support team is seen as an important factor in the success of school counseling.

4.3.3 What could do better?

In VO, mentees experience differences in the degree and quality of help they receive from their mentors. This leads to varying experiences among mentees, with some indicating that their mentor's guidance is clear and supportive, while others feel they need more direction or attention.

In addition, students in VO report that there is sometimes a lack of clarity about the rubrics used for assessments. The assessment criteria are not always clear, causing confusion about expectations and how to improve their performance.

In PO, parents indicate that they would like to receive more information about the tests used in the BOOM student tracking system. Although the system provides good insight into student progress, parents do not always feel adequately informed about the content and purpose of these tests. More clarity about what the tests measure and how the results should be interpreted would contribute to a better understanding of their children's development.

Finally, teachers in both PO and VO signal that they need more tools to effectively differentiate within their groups. Differentiation is essential in a diverse learning environment such as DENISE, where students vary in language level, background and learning needs. However, teachers sometimes lack sufficient time, resources and practical strategies to accommodate this diversity, especially in classes where differences are large. This can result in not all students receiving the appropriate level of support and challenge they need to perform at their best.

4.3.4 Ambitions and goals

For the school plan related to this topic, we are committed to clear measurement tools and targeted guidance so that student development is systematically and transparently charted. Our ambitions and goals focus on improving the measurability of learning outcomes, providing clear feedback and increasing the involvement of students and parents in the learning process.

4.3.4.1 Uniformity in rubrics for better progress measurement

In order to measure student progress consistently and objectively, we are working to create uniformity in the rubrics used. This ensures that both students and teachers have a clear picture of the learning goals to be achieved, the steps needed to reach them and a good prediction of the level of progression.

For students, this means that they have a better understanding of what they are working toward, while teachers have a better understanding of the learning lines and learning objectives within their subject areas. This consistency helps provide more focused guidance for student development.

4.3.4.2 Review of reports in PO and VO

We aim to revise certain aspects of the current reports, both in primary education (PO) and in secondary education (VO). This with the goal of mapping student development even better while making it more transparent for both students and parents. We are reconsidering whether we will work in the Language Program, PO and IMYC with a portfolio that will be added to the report. This will give the reports more insight into progress in different areas of development and clearly show where growth is possible. This will give all involved a better picture of the student's performance and learning development and students will feel more ownership of their learning.

4.3.4.3 Improving and possibly expanding personal mentoring in VO

We are evaluating personal mentoring in the Language Program and two-year mentoring in the DP and improving what is needed. We are considering implementing a two-year mentorship within the IMYC program so that students can be mentored by the same mentor for a longer period of time. This will provide more opportunities for the mentor to closely monitor and support the mentee's personal and academic development, contributing to a stronger mentor-student relationship and more focused support. In addition to academic support, more emphasis will be placed within personal mentoring on the mental health and well-being of mentees. It is essential that mentees develop well not only cognitively but also emotionally. Therefore, mentors will be trained to better recognize and discuss signs of stress, overload or emotional problems. The goal is to create a safe environment where students can talk openly about their mental well-being and receive timely support, if needed. Through this additional focus on mental health, we aim to help promote resilience, self-awareness and the overall well-being of our students. A permanent mentoring program in the programs where this is not yet in place, so that certain topics are always covered and mentors can do focused work during their mentoring class.

4.3.4.4 Evaluation of the student monitoring system in PO

In primary education (PO), we continue to evaluate our student tracking system (LVS) to ensure that it matches both our educational offerings and the diversity of our student population. By reviewing the LVS regularly, we ensure that the system remains an effective and relevant tool for monitoring student development. We want the LVS not only to provide measurable data, but also to align with the holistic view of education and development that we strive for as a school.

5. Safety and school climate

5.1 Description of current situation

5.1.1 DENISE Community Code

At DENISE we learn what our core values, responsibility, connectedness and open-mindedness mean in society. During the 2024-2025 school year, we will continue to dialogue about this with students, school staff and parents. Our ambition is to prepare students for world citizenship. A world in which they can play an active role as global citizens. Creating a pleasant and safe school community with young world citizens does not happen by itself. It requires effort and maintenance from all of us every day. We are responsible together to give meaning to and propagate our core values. Actually in all lessons but especially the International Primary Curriculum lessons (in PO), and drama, Man & Society, Social Studies, IB Individuals & Societies and Theory of Knowledge (in VO) we engage in debate about society and the many tough issues of life. The life stories of students are all impressive stories and they provide an interesting picture of how values are significant in the lives of our students.

We are very proud of our school culture formed by our super-diverse community made up of staff, students and parents. In order to keep our school culture so good, the DENISE Community Code has been established, with a set of principles, which everyone who is part of our DENISE community adheres to.

1. Everyone is treated equally regardless of religion, belief, political affiliation, sex, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, disability/chronic illness, appearance or age.
2. We make only constructive comments and avoid language that may hurt or demean others for what is named at 1.
3. We ensure that no one is excluded or ignored because of what is named at 1.; everyone is involved and valued.
4. We make respectful and clear comments and avoid ambiguous jokes or comments about sexuality and intimacy or what is named at 1.
5. We respect each other's personal space and avoid unnecessary physical contact.
6. We communicate in a respectful manner, without swearing, yelling or using physical force.
7. We respect everyone's individual responsibility and do not hold anyone personally responsible for the decisions of (political) leaders.
8. We respect everyone's (personal) boundaries, both physical and emotional.
9. We respect each other, giving each other space for everyone's perspective and opinion, even when we disagree, as long as an opinion does not go against the school rules and what is named at 1.

The above manners can take place both in direct contact and online via social media.

10. The curriculum offerings at DENISE are based on both international and national (established statutory) learning objectives. Staff at DENISE determine how these are fulfilled. Multiperspectivity is needed to learn to understand the environment (school, city, country, world) without judgment.
11. Participation in all activities at DENISE is with the intention of understanding the environment (school, city, country, world).

5.1.2 Monitor social and physical safety

Everyone within DENISE contributes to social-emotional safety within the school. We assume that parents, students and staff report when safety is at stake. Based on reports and other signals, we can intervene. To provide the quality we envision, we are in constant dialogue with students, teachers, parents and partners in the school environment about the design of our education.

Our ten rules of conduct (see section 5.1.3) and the DENISE Community Code (previous section) are an important guide to keeping our school environment safe for everyone. Violating these rules results in sanctions (see explanation in Section 5.1.4).

In particular, we will firmly delineate and address bullying behavior as it arises. The school believes it is important to address bullying preventively. We do this by working on the social-emotional development of children and working on a safe climate in the group, even if there are no signs of bullying. Furthermore, we make agreements in class about how we want to get along with each other, we work in elementary school with social-emotional lessons and in secondary school with mentoring lessons. We deal with social-emotional subjects. We pay explicit attention to everyone's role as a participant in the globalizing multicultural society. We also use external parties for training and work with youth workers in the school. We have laid down the agreements in the [anti-bullying protocol](#). The goal is that all children feel safe at school and can develop optimally as global citizens with resilience, a sense of ethics, communicative ability, thoughtfulness, cooperation and respect for each other and their environment. Our core values of responsibility, connectedness and open-mindedness align seamlessly with this.

The rector is the first point of contact when it comes to physical and social safety in and around the school. The confidants for students and parents are listed in section 4.6 of the school guide. The rector works together with the anti-bullying coordinator and attention officer Mr. J. Post and Mrs. G. Brescia. An attention officer monitors the steps in the [Reporting Code for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse](#). The law obliges the educational field to have and use this code. The purpose of this obligation is to intervene more quickly and adequately in cases of suspected domestic violence and child abuse. The reporting code includes an assessment framework. The assessment framework consists of five questions. The reporting code also includes the participation of children. Regarding safety with regard to the layout of the building, a professional in-house emergency service (BHV) and also physical safety in the vicinity of the school in relation to our students, the agreement is that the rector is first point of contact. The rector does this in collaboration with the prevention officer (Mr. Van der Wal). A prevention officer monitors daily safety, occupational risks and health in the school. This employee can propose preventive measures to the rector.

This includes checking on rumors. The rector and the prevention officer are in close contact with the district police officer, the school police officer and other important officials in the district. Contact with the media is always through the rector. If necessary, the rector handles communication (tailored) about an incident to staff and parents/pupils.

5.1.3 Ten school rules

At DENISE, we treat each other, students, parents and everyone who is a guest with respect. We treat each other as we would like to be treated ourselves. We do not judge each other, but engage in conversation. We ask each other questions and listen. We speak to each other and help each other. Together we are responsible for the atmosphere in the school and shaping the three core values of DENISE. In addition, we adhere to the following ten concrete agreements.

These are the 10 appointments for vo:

1. You will be at the place where you are expected at the class start time. See class schedule on the website or Magister.
2. You eat and drink where you belong (not in the classrooms) and behave around the school. You don't hang out in porches.
3. You treat fellow students and staff members with respect and use respectful language. Bullying is unacceptable. See anti-bullying protocol.
4. You follow instructions from the school staff.
5. You leave the room tidy, you do not pollute the room or its belongings. You also clean up the place where you ate during the break. Do not touch the spindles on the windows.
6. You will carry a properly functioning charged Chromebook and use it during class for learning only. Cell phones are prohibited in the classroom and will be turned in to the "phone hotel" upon entry. Your cell phone may be taken (pre-emptively) by the teacher. The teacher will turn the phone over to the school administration. After a conversation and, if necessary, a sanction, the phone will be returned.
7. You don't wear a coat in class.
8. Homework is done and work handed in at the appointed time.
9. You will not take pictures or videos unless you have permission from a teacher. Distributing photos or recordings of others is not permitted.
10. Physical/verbal violence, stealing, dealing, weapons, drugs, smoking and drinking are prohibited inside and outside the school. We maintain a zero-tolerance policy. This means that immediate suspension (temporarily no on-site instruction) may be issued after hearing back about the incident.

For the PO, there are 9 golden rules that are posted on a poster all over the department and thus visible to members of the DENISE Community. See Figure 5 for this.



Figure 5. Poster 9 Golden Agreements DENISE PO

5.1.4 Consequences for non-compliance and student statute

(Repeatedly) not keeping to these agreements can lead to a sanction and even a temporary suspension of education at DENISE. We use an escalation ladder for this. We inform parents if an agreement is not kept. If necessary, a conversation with the mentor follows. In serious and/or persistent incidents, a conversation with the department leader or the connector or rector may follow. More about the rights and obligations of students can be found in [the student statute](#) and about the methods and consequences in the DENISE Community Code on our website. This also explains what happens if the student does something that is not allowed. The student statute also states what is expected of students in school, as well as what students can expect from the school, teachers and their fellow students. The charter also includes the rules regarding suspension and expulsion.

5.2 What goes right?

Parents appreciate the school's clear and consistent approach when it comes to safety and structure. Some key points they mention are:

- PO teacher greeting upon entry: The personal welcome at the start of class helps create a positive and respectful climate.

- Golden Weeks: The start-up period at the beginning of the school year helps build a close-knit group dynamic and promotes a safe classroom atmosphere.
- No phones during classes: This policy provides focus and encourages personal contact between students.
- Clear rules for the DENISE community: The clear guidelines help maintain order and clarity, contributing to a sense of security.
- Parent support materials: Parents are well informed and supported in their role, contributing to a strong partnership between school and home.
- Anti-Bullying Protocol: The active policy against bullying is highly appreciated and contributes to the prevention of unsafe situations.
- Positive atmosphere: Parents experience a positive atmosphere within the school, where everyone feels welcome.
- Smaller groups: These allow for more attention to individual students and their needs.
- Sense of safety: Parents and students perceive the school as a safe place where incidents are rare.
- Trusted person to talk to: Students know that they can always turn to a trusted person for advice or support.
- Separation of politics and education: Political discussions are kept outside the school, ensuring a neutral and safe learning environment.
- Accessibility of the school: The school is easily accessible to both parents and students.
- Approachable communication: There is open and accessible communication between the school and parents, which contributes to trust and cooperation.

Staff also experience the school climate at DENISE as positive and safe. Among the points they mention are the following:

- Clear Bullying and Absence Protocols: The school maintains clear and effective guidelines to address bullying behavior and absences.
- No school bell: The absence of a school bell contributes to a quiet and relaxed atmosphere in the building.
- Professional SLS team: The strong School Learning Support team (SLS) provides both students and teachers with the necessary support.
- Pleasant atmosphere within the school: Compared to other schools, employees experience a pleasant working atmosphere, which has a positive impact on the well-being of both employees and students.
- Clarity in school policies: School policies are becoming increasingly clear, contributing to a sense of security and structure.
- OOP support: These staff members play an important role in supporting the teaching staff.
- Active MR: The Participation Council (MR) is increasingly active in supporting the school and contributing to decision-making and policy development.
- Publication of the DENISE Community Code: This code provides clear guidelines for desired behavior and contributes to a safe and respectful school climate.

- Positive atmosphere preventing social insecurity: The atmosphere propagated together with colleagues and students within the school does not permit social insecurity. Occasional unsafe situations are dealt with appropriately.

Secondary school students confirm in satisfaction surveys that they experience a strong sense of security. They indicate that the rules within the school are clear and that this contributes to a structured and safe learning environment.

5.2 What could do better?

Parents report that their children need more help making friends. Although the school functions well in many areas, some children feel less socially connected. Parents advocate for more support in fostering friendships so that all students feel welcome and safe in the school community.

In addition, parents ask for more supervision during breaks. They feel that during these times there is sometimes insufficient visibility of what is happening, which can lead to conflicts or unsafe situations. The traffic situation when bringing and picking up students is also a concern; parents point to the need for better traffic control to ensure safety around the school.

Bullying remains a challenge, especially in PO. Parents feel that more attention should be paid to this, especially when it comes to communication about bullying incidents and timely intervention when problems arise. They call for clear communication and quicker action when bullying occurs.

Parents feel that more preventive work could be done on education around discrimination, including more attention to topics such as swear words and dealing with differences.

Furthermore, parents indicate that the school needs to think more carefully about the use of apps that collect personal data from students. They are concerned about their children's privacy and would like more transparency about which apps are used and how data is protected.

Finally, parents ask for better communication around difficult topics that are sometimes discussed in class. They see the need for open-minded education, but feel that sensitive topics are sometimes handled uncomfortably or that students are not adequately prepared to participate in such discussions.

Primary school students report that they generally feel less comfortable at school compared to the benchmark.

In VO, students have indicated that large and sensitive topics are sometimes discussed at uncomfortable times, such as during an assembly, which is not always appropriate. They call for more attention to debate and the promotion of open-mindedness in a more appropriate setting. They also indicate that consequences for unacceptable behavior are not always consistent or are sometimes imposed too late.

There is a need for a more proactive approach in preventing undesirable behavior, rather than reactive responses when problems arise.

Students from VO also mention that they would like more 1-on-1 time with their mentor, to build a stronger relationship and receive more personalized guidance. While it is positive that there are two mentors per group, mentees indicate that there needs to be more investment in their well-being and that there is sometimes too much emphasis on academic performance and not enough on the well-being of the mentee.

Teachers also see some areas for improvement. They note that group formation does not always run smoothly, which can lead to tensions and social insecurity within classes. In addition, they say not enough attention is paid to online safety, an increasingly important issue in the digital age. Teachers see more reactive action being taken instead of working preventively on safety issues. There is a need for a clear line and more consistency in how teachers work to promote safety and prevent undesirable behavior within groups.

5.3 Ambitions and goals

For the school plan in the area of safety and school climate, we are committed to a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment in which all students can develop to their fullest potential. Our ambitions and goals focus on strengthening the community, working from prevention and ensuring both physical and digital safety.

5.3.1 DENISE Community Code as part of our school culture

The DENISE Community Code forms the basis of our shared framework of values and standards of behavior. This code represents respect, inclusiveness and responsibility within our school community. One of our ambitions is to further raise awareness of this code so that all members of the community - students, teachers, parents and staff - are actively aware of what is expected of them. We will do this by regularly discussing the code in mentoring hours, parent meetings and team meetings, and by making visible how the values of the code are reflected in everyday school practices. The goal is that the DENISE Community Code is not just a theoretical framework, but a living document that forms the basis of our school climate. The DENISE Community Code becomes part of the curriculum, with the ICC Coordinator ensuring that policies are developed and implemented that aim to integrate the DENISE Community Code into all areas of learning to help students develop competencies in these areas.

This includes a clear focus on creating a cohesive program that encourages adherence to the DENISE Community Code across the curriculum.

5.3.2 Working from prevention in VO and PO

We aim to work more preventively in both primary and secondary education in the area of socio-emotional safety. In secondary education (VO), personal mentoring plays a role in this.

By having mentors work with mentees for a longer period of time and providing them with personal guidance, they can identify in a timely manner when mentees need social-emotional support. In primary education (PO), we are considering the introduction of a new method for social-emotional learning (SEL). This method will help students strengthen their social skills, self-regulation and emotional well-being. The goal is to create a positive and safe learning environment in which students can develop socially and emotionally so that any problems are addressed early. In both PO and VO, we will work with the Ring Approach. The Ring approach is a group dynamic approach to look at the group, consists of 8 concrete steps and is based on a systemic whole. During the guidance process this whole is closely examined. Teachers receive training in this so that they can accelerate and improve the group process.

5.3.3 A thorough and integral security plan

An important goal for the coming years is to develop and implement a thorough and integral safety plan that meets all legal requirements and protocols. This plan will focus not only on physical safety in and around the school, but also on the psychosocial and digital safety of our students. The anti-bullying protocol will become part of the safety plan. Special attention will be paid to digital safety, including the protection of personal data and the responsible handling of data. At a time when technology is playing an increasing role in education, it is critical that we make our students aware of their digital footprint and teach them how to navigate online safely and responsibly. This includes carefully handling data collection within our school, while maintaining student privacy.

6. Human Resources

6.1 Description of current situation

At DENISE, we value a strong and transparent personnel policy that contributes to the professional development of our team and the quality of education. Our personnel policy is based on clear agreements, development opportunities and support for all our employees. From focus point 3 of the Education Manifesto of Esprit schools *Employee Magnet*, we implement this within DENISE in various ways.

6.1.1 Current workforce

As of November 1, 2024, 130 employees worked within DENISE. 96 employees fall under the teaching staff. Within the educational support staff were 26 employees. The school leadership consisted of five department leaders and two acting directors (one director combined with department leadership), three department leaders are women and one department leader is male. The acting rector is male and the acting conector is female. Six employees were employed in both PO and VO. Of the 96 employees, two are not qualified but are studying in the final stages of teacher education.

6.1.2 Recruitment

At DENISE, we strive to attract competent and motivated employees who contribute to the quality of our education and fit within the unique culture of our school. One of the most important conditions for employment with us is that new employees are qualified for the education they will be teaching, or are in the completion phase of their training. In addition, the candidate's profile plays a crucial role in the recruitment process. We assess each applicant based on the profile of the DENISE teacher, as described in our Professional Charter. Among other things, this profile emphasizes the need for pedagogical and teaching competence, flexibility, a learning attitude and the ability to work effectively together in an international and diverse educational environment. We seek candidates who not only possess the appropriate qualifications, but also align with our values and vision of education. In assembling our team, we strive for a workforce that properly reflects our diverse student population and society, while also taking into account a gender balance. This applies to both teaching staff and educational support staff and school leadership. In particular, We value diversity and inclusion within our team because we believe that a diverse group of staff contributes to a richer learning environment that is centered on different perspectives and experiences.

6.1.3 Professional Statute

Within the school we work with a Professional Statute, in which all agreements regarding personnel policy, professional development and responsibilities of the team are laid down. This document acts as a guide for both daily practice and long-term goals in the area of personnel policy. The statute is currently being rewritten to ensure that it reflects the latest developments and needs within the school and the educational landscape. In it, agreements around professionalization, workload, participation, and responsibilities are revised and clarified.

6.1.4 Bootcamps and Professionalization

Each year we organize ten study days, which we call "bootcamps. These bootcamps provide a valuable opportunity for team members to focus on both their own professionalization and joint educational planning. The days are made up of different modules, which on the one hand provide time for deepening pedagogical-didactic knowledge and skills, and on the other hand create space for planning and preparing lessons. The bootcamps not only ensure knowledge exchange and cooperation within the team, but also contribute to anchoring our educational vision and goals at the school level.

6.1.5 Esprit Academy and other providers

DENISE is part of the Esprit School Group, which allows us to take advantage of the extensive opportunities offered by the Esprit Academy. Through this academy, employees can take courses, trainings and education that fit their own professional development and the needs of the school. These offerings range from professional continuing education to training in the areas of pedagogy, didactics, and leadership.

In addition, we encourage taking specific courses that fit our international focus, such as International Baccalaureate workshops. Colleagues involved in the IB program are given the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the specific teaching methods and pedagogical approach of the IB curriculum, thus meeting international education standards. In school year 2024-2025 a start was made on professionalizing staff through Erasmus+.

6.1.6 School educators

The school educators play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of our teaching team. They keep an up-to-date record of the qualifications and training of all teachers, enabling us to ensure that the right expertise and certification are present within our team. This enables us to make targeted investments in further professionalization and to identify and fill any gaps in expertise in a timely manner.

In addition, school educators are responsible for mentoring new colleagues. They ensure that new team members integrate quickly into the school culture and provide them with the necessary support to perform their jobs successfully.

This includes providing mentorship, organizing familiarization programs and facilitating peer exchange.

6.2 What goes right?

An employee satisfaction survey conducted in November 2023 shows that employees are satisfied with their work at DENISE, giving an average of 8.7 for overall satisfaction (see Figure 6). Figure 7 describes the areas in which employees are satisfied. Here, the working climate, content of work, school leadership and cooperation are the strengths of DENISE as a workplace. This is also reflected in the answers from the questionnaires and the conversations during the focus groups. Also, employees indicate that they feel and are given enough space to professionalize. The school culture encourages employees to communicate openly about their workload, which ensures a better balance between work and well-being.

6.3 What could do better?

Both the employee satisfaction survey and the questionnaire and focus groups reveal that the interview cycle needs to be improved. According to the employees, there is no clarity about the cycle and there are differences between the managers as to how the interview cycle is implemented. According to the employees, professionalization should be included in the interview cycle so that every employee has the opportunity to develop. The Esprit Academy is well known among the employees, but according to them it is still underused.



Figure 6. Overall employee satisfaction DENISE 2023

	Score	Percentage of dissatisfied employees	Percentage of satisfied employees	Position in the priority matrix
Workplace atmosphere	8.4	1 %	97 %	Strong points
Content of the work	8.3	0 %	95 %	Strong points
Immediate supervisor/team leader	8.0	5 %	82 %	Maintain
Principal	7.9	3 %	83 %	Strong points
Collaboration	7.8	2 %	87 %	Maintain
Working conditions	7.6	6 %	80 %	Maintain
Education	7.5	4 %	81 %	Maintain
Personal development	7.0	14 %	68 %	Points of improvement
Communication	6.8	16 %	63 %	Points of attention
Interview cycle	6.7	18 %	63 %	Points of attention
Workload	6.5	19 %	55 %	Points of improvement

Figure 7. Employee satisfaction DENISE by component 2023

6.4 Ambitions and goals

With respect to DENISE's human resources policy, we focus on professionalizing our processes, creating clarity and transparency in career development, and strengthening guidance for interns, beginning teachers, and new employees. Our ambitions and goals focus on providing a work environment where staff feel heard, are well supported, and have the opportunity for professional development. Below are the focal points of our personnel policy.

6.4.1 Digitalization of the interview cycle through Quality Schools

An important ambition is the digitization of the interview cycle through Quality Schools. This ensures a clear and structured process in which it is clear what the cycle looks like, what the expectations are and what steps are taken. Through the use of Quality Schools, the interview cycle is standardized so that every manager works the same way. This provides greater clarity and consistency for all employees, who know exactly where they stand in their evaluations and professional development. The digital system also provides a transparent record of progress and agreements, helping to ensure clear communication between employees and supervisors. Students, at least in VO, also get a voice in this as student evaluations become part of the feedback collected by the teacher and then reflected in the development conversation.

6.4.2 Clarity on job mix and promotion policy

We are striving for greater clarity on the job mix and promotion policy within DENISE. This includes clear criteria for promotion to higher salary scales and positions, so that employees know what steps they can take to develop their careers. We formulate a clear promotion policy that describes what is expected of employees in terms of performance, competencies and development opportunities. This transparency helps manage expectations and motivates employees to work purposefully on their professional growth. We also ensure that the job mix does justice to the diversity of functions and responsibilities within the team.

6.4.3 DENISE as an accredited training school

As part of Esprit Schools, DENISE will also be an accredited training school, with clear policies and structured guidance for trainees, beginning teachers and new staff. This means that we create a professional and supportive learning environment in which they have the opportunity to develop to their full potential. We set up a mentoring and guidance structure in which experienced teachers play an active role in guiding trainees and new colleagues. For starting teachers and new employees, we offer a thorough induction program, in which attention is paid not only to pedagogical and didactic actions, but also to the social and cultural aspect of our school.

Through this focus on mentoring and development, we want to ensure that new colleagues quickly feel at home and effectively find their way within our school.

6.4.4 Professional development and collaboration within Esprit Schools and other providers

As part of Esprit Scholen, we want to take full advantage of the professional development opportunities within the school group. This means opportunities for internal cooperation, sharing best practices, and joint professional development projects. We strive to remain a learning organization within the Esprit Group, where knowledge and expertise are shared and where there is room for continuous professional growth. The Esprit Academy will be brought more to the attention of employees. In addition, we examine per subject whether this requires training and whether we have this in the school or an external provider can provide this. Employees (OP and OOP) have the opportunity to follow training in Europe via Erasmus+. This can be done by following a course or by shadowing at another school which is part of Erasmus+.

7. Stewardship, quality assurance and ambitions

7.1 Description situation

It is Esprit Schools' ambition to continuously improve education. To this end, not only does each school individually examine its quality, but we also regularly do so among ourselves as schools. Naturally, the quality of each school must meet the basic requirements set by the government. The school management, the Board of Governors and ultimately the Education Inspectorate, pay attention to this. Within Esprit Schools, quality assurance is evaluated in various ways.

Every year we question our students and biannually the parents about the quality of our education via digitally completed surveys. All data regarding (exam) results of students, progression data and satisfaction surveys of students and parents are publicly accessible through the national website 'Scholen op de kaart' (see [our elementary school](#) and [our secondary school](#)). For more info on education results look at [aan-the-slag-with-the-education-results model](#) for our elementary school or [education results model secondary education](#).

We also ask employees every two years for their opinions and experiences about the school and the Board through an employee satisfaction survey. The results of the surveys are discussed at the school, then reported by the school administration and discussed with the Executive Board. Where necessary, we make agreements for improvement and the Executive Board adds any necessary resources for this purpose.

Every two years, using a standardized questionnaire via Synaxion, we make a self-evaluation of the most important aspects of the quality of education delivered. Working with standardized questions allows us to compare and discuss our results with the other schools within the board.

Every three years, a group of colleagues from Esprit Schools visit the school (trained auditors) who examine whether the self-evaluation we have written is valid. We call this Peer Appreciative Quality Surveys (cwko's). The results of the examination help us to improve educational quality within the school. In this way, we learn from a positive perspective, from and with each other, by learning about innovations and changes.

Every five years, DENISE is visited by external auditors from the IB to determine if the standards are still being met. If the standards are met, the school may call itself an IB World School for the following five years and offer the programs visited. The school also receives a report from this visit. The March 2024 report can [be found through this internal link](#).

School leadership works within DENISE on school development by focusing on program, personnel and process. Figure 7 shows which components of school development fall under these. Innovations are phased in by first initiating and orienting, then experimenting, implementing if successful, and finally consolidating.

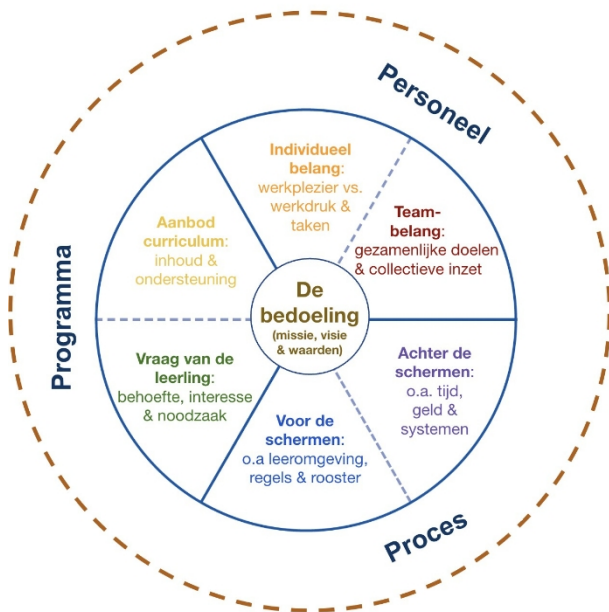


Figure 7. Model school development (*practice research 36 schools, see: "From design to development"*) This version of the developed model was created by Luc Sluijsmans (2023).

Regular lesson observations are a core part of our quality assurance. These lesson observations are conducted by school leaders and/or members of the teaching team who are trained in the use of the DENISE viewing guide. The purpose of lesson visits is twofold:

- Quality assurance: Ensuring that pedagogical-didactic standards are consistently applied.
- Professional Development: Providing teachers with targeted feedback that they can use to improve their teaching practices.

The findings of the lesson visits are discussed in a follow-up feedback session, in which teachers reflect on their actions and are given concrete areas for improvement.

In addition to formal observations, we also encourage peer consultation as a tool for professional growth. This involves colleagues visiting each other's classes in a structured way and providing feedback. This is done using the same DENISE viewing guide, ensuring that feedback is consistent and focused on key pedagogical-didactic goals. Peer consultation contributes to the creation of a learning culture within the school, in which openness and sharing of good practices are central.

By learning from and with each other, teachers strengthen their own skills and contribute to the joint development of education within the school. The use of lesson visits and peer consultation promotes a culture of continuous learning and improvement, which ultimately benefits the quality of teaching and learning of students.

7.2 What goes right?

At DENISE, according to staff members, a strong foundation has been laid for quality assurance. DENISE has a clear vision and clear goals that are concretely translated into educational policy. Staff and school management work together to continuously improve and guarantee the quality of education based on this vision. This vision is widely supported within the school. According to the employees, there is a culture in which professional development and cooperation are central. There is a safe learning environment in which employees actively contribute to quality improvement. This is expressed, among other things, during boot camps, where subject sections and Mileposts are given more and more space to work on their curriculum and its evaluation. Protocols are regularly reviewed and ambitions are sharpened. In PO, self-assessments were made using the Education Inspectorate's quality areas. Employees in PO found this to be a good method of mapping the quality of education and identifying points of development.

7.3 What could do better?

Staff indicate that some new practices are implemented too quickly and evaluation is regularly lacking. It is not always clear why certain educational and organizational choices are made. Communication about this from the school management could be better, according to employees. Although it is said that there is a clear vision and clear goals, employees miss clear spearheads that are being worked on to improve the quality of education.

7.4 Ambitions and goals

As part of quality assurance, the school aims to work systematically to improve education. The focus is on data-oriented work, fostering professional collaboration, and strengthening communication and evaluation processes. These ambitions are aligned with the PDCA cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act) to achieve sustainable improvement. The following ambitions and goals form the core of our quality assurance.

7.4.1 Working more data-oriented

Our ambition is to gain better insight into educational results and processes by working in a more data-oriented way. We are using analysis tools such as Ultimview for PO, Synaxion and Quality Schools. We are investigating whether Zermelo for VO is a good program. These platforms allow us to collect, analyze and evaluate data in a structured way.

On the basis of these analyses, we can more specifically identify which aspects of teaching need further development and what support is needed to do so. We use the evaluation and feedback provided by the IB on teacher assessment in the IB exams.

7.4.2 Working with an annual plan by department

We strive to take a more planned and goal-oriented approach to education. Each school year, a specific annual plan is drawn up for each department, containing the main spearheads that will be worked on. These spearheads are tailored to the needs of the department and based on data analysis from Synaxion and Quality Schools. By working with department-specific annual plans, we can make targeted improvements that fit the local situation.

7.4.3 Working cyclically with the PDCA- cycle

An important ambition is to work cyclically according to the PDCA cycle. This means that we continuously plan, implement, check and adjust in order to realize a structural improvement of our education. Extra attention is paid to communication and evaluation within this cycle. This ensures that all those involved are well informed about progress and that improvements are implemented in a transparent and effective manner.

7.4.4 Lesson visits and peer consultation

To ensure the quality of teaching, we see lesson visits and peer consultation as crucial activities. Through these hands-on observations and feedback sessions, teachers can learn from each other and improve their teaching practices. This encourages a culture of openness, collaboration and continuous professional development within the team. In Quality Schools, lesson visits and peer consultation become a regular feature.

7.4.5 Research on DENISE connection to Education Network Amsterdam

Finally, we want to explore whether DENISE can join the Education Network Amsterdam (ONA). The purpose of this is to work more evidence-based and use scientifically based methods to increase the quality of our education. An affiliation with ONA offers us access to new insights and innovative approaches, which helps us to further develop our education.

8. Ambitions and goals

In the table below (Table 2), our school's ambitions and goals for the next four years are outlined and translated into concrete and measurable goals, so that it is clear what DENISE wants to achieve in its school development. The concrete actions and timelines needed to achieve these goals are further elaborated in the annual plans, both school-wide and by department. To learn more about a goal, click on the goal and a link will appear to the piece of text in this school plan related to that goal.

Subject	Goals DENISE (press the goal for a link with more information)
Basic skills and educational offerings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The continuous learning lines in PO and VO are guaranteed. 2. Sustainability and citizenship have an explicit place in the curriculum of PO and VO. 3. Students' digital skills are well developed with additional focus on continued development of (hand) writing skills. 4. If possible and desirable, a broader range of subjects will be offered in the IMYC and DP. 5. Work on the PTA begins in grade 11.
Pedagogical and didactic practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Each teacher differentiates during the lesson, providing students with additional support and/or challenge as needed. 7. There is uniformity in the pedagogical and didactic actions of the teachers based on the DENISE viewing guide. 8. Every teacher at DENISE is a language teacher.
Views on development and guidance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. We create unified rubrics for measuring student progress. 10. The report (rapport) in PO and VO gives a good picture of a student's development. 11. In VO, mentoring is evaluated and adjusted as needed. 12. In the PO, the student tracking system is evaluated and adjusted as needed.
Safety and school climate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. The DENISE Community Code will have a place within the curriculum. 14. In the PO and VO, we work preventively on the (socio-emotional) safety of the DENISE Community. 15. DENISE has a thorough and comprehensive security plan that meets legal requirements.

Subject	Goals DENISE (press the goal for a link with more information)
Human Resources	<p>16. The interview cycle is digitized and implemented through Quality Schools.</p> <p>17. DENISE has a clear policy regarding job mix and promotion policy.</p> <p>18. DENISE is an accredited training school.</p> <p>19. Employees take advantage of professionalization offerings within and outside Esprit Schools.</p>
Stewardship, quality assurance and ambitions	<p>20. Within DENISE, among other things, data is used to evaluate and possibly improve course and policy.</p> <p>21. An annual plan is used school-wide and by department.</p> <p>22. Cyclical efforts are made within DENISE to improve teaching and support processes.</p> <p>23. Lesson visits and peer consultation are structurally integrated into the quality assurance system.</p> <p>24. We work evidence-based by implementing science-based methods for improving our educational quality.</p>

Table 2. DENISE goals by topic (continued).

Attachments

Appendix 1



Name:	1 Not seen while applicable 2 More often not seen than seen 3 More often seen than not seen 4 Always seen NVT
Lesson:	
Date:	

Competence	1-4
Interpersonally competent	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher ensures good interaction with and between students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students accept the teacher's pedagogical-didactic leadership 	
Organizationally competent	
Lesson structure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher makes clear the purpose and structure of the lesson 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the goal of the lesson fits the level of the students, not too easy and not too difficult 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> during class time, effective teaching time is at least 90% 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficient time is given to the various scheduled teaching activities 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher refers back to important items covered at the end of the lesson 	
Pedagogically competent	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher provides a climate in which good work can be done 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher encourages students to treat each other respectfully 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher treats all students equally 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher has positive expectations of students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher makes realistic demands for student effort and achievement 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students are engaged in the lesson 	

Professionally and didactically competent	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher activates students to learn by listening carefully to them and by asking challenging, open-ended questions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher uses forms of work that enable students to achieve the learning/lesson objective 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher activates prior knowledge 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher uses ICT as a didactic tool 	
Differentiate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the assignments and guidance show that the lesson was prepared based on information about the students' learning level 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher provides students who need additional or supplemental instruction or support 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher gives students who need more challenge the opportunity to process basic material in a more compact way and engage in enrichment material 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the assignments fit the student's development and needs 	
International minded	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher uses concrete examples and materials that connect to students' perceptions and cultural backgrounds 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher encourages students to learn respectfully about and from different perspectives (different views, ideas, solution strategies) 	
Focused on language development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher actively encourages use of the target language during the lesson 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher allows the student to use the mother tongue for learning purposes (e.g., glossary in two languages, summarizing text(s) in mother tongue, activating prior knowledge in mother tongue) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher explicitly covers subject language words and school language words in each lesson 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher makes language visual 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher adapts the mode of speech to the language level of the students 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher checks that students understand the subject matter/assignment 	
Coherent education/ Endorses IPC, IMYC and IB	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher integrates different skills into assignments/materials/lessons 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher links the subject of the lesson to other subjects/subjects or the student's environment 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher places the lesson material in a larger framework (e.g. IPC theme, IMYC, IB, learning cycle or PTA) 	
Feedback on learning	

● the teacher communicates with students about how to approach their learning task	
● the teacher has clear expectations of the level of learning tasks, for example through rubrics	
● the teacher provides feedback on student progress during individual work or group work	
● feedback focuses more on student progress than correction	