

# The language of love

At the Kindergarten of the International Waldorf School The Hague, there are 17 children of 19 different nationalities. Some children have two or three nationalities, speak multiple languages, and have several countries they call home.

For these children, searching for their culture is a journey of recognising or finding their, and others', uniqueness at a very young age. Language can be an important vehicle for this. While the main language of communication is English, a minority of children in the Kindergarten are native speakers. Luckily, we have found understanding each other is not dependent on language alone.

## My journey

I am fortunate to have direct experience of this situation. I moved to the Netherlands as a nine-year-old, and remember the frustration when no one understood me, and the relief when I met someone who did.

When I was nine, being allowed to be myself, with everything that makes me unique, was essential and more important than being able to speak and understand Dutch. The attention and love I found in my environment allowed me to connect to others. The language of love touched me, rather than the new language I had to learn.

## Warmth and imagination

At the International Waldorf School The Hague, my main objective is to create a warm and imaginative space, where children feel safe to come into the kindergarten with everything that they are—their culture, their language and all.

Children want to take everything in, and to digest what I am thinking—reflected in my actions. So it is important for me, as the kindergarten teacher, to try to be conscious about all that I do. I have learned that the role of the teacher is to be a presence that every child needs.

## We all speak the same language

I hope at our school that we can create a place of love and perhaps a burgeoning awareness that everyone is a little bit different and, at the same time, very much alike. That no matter where you come from, or how much you have travelled, or what language you speak, we all speak the same language. The language of love. «

## Contact

International Waldorf School The Hague  
2e Messstraat 31, 2586 XA The Hague



+31 70 7830030  
info@iwsth.org  
internationalwaldorfschool.nl

