

The Norwegian School in London

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Anne Duffy HMI

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

The Norwegian School in London is an independent school for boys and girls aged 3 to 16 years. The school was established in 1981 as a school for Norwegian expatriate children, resident, for longer or shorter periods, in the London area. Admission to the school is non-selective and at the time of the inspection there were 105 pupils on roll. There are five pupils that have a statement of special educational needs. The school aims to ensure 'that pupils enjoy school, are partners in cooperation, should feel responsible for their own learning, obtain knowledge about England and gain competence in information and communication technology'. It is a registered charity with a board of six members.

The school was last inspected in November 2008 when it was judged to provide a good quality of education, but procedures for safeguarding pupils and some health and safety systems were found not to meet regulations. Some new staff, including the headteacher, one deputy headteacher and the business manager, have joined the school since the last inspection.

Evaluation of the school

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils and for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Kindergarten); the aims of the school are clearly met. Curricular provision is good and meets the needs of the pupils well; pupils are highly motivated and make good progress overall. Teaching and assessment are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is their behaviour. Some new procedures for welfare, health and safety have not yet had chance to become well established and so this area is satisfactory overall. Safeguarding arrangements are secure. The school has addressed the unmet regulations from the last inspection and now meets all of the regulatory requirements.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is based on the Norwegian National Curriculum and this aids transition for pupils who move to and from Norway during their school career. The curriculum aims to develop 'the spiritual, creative, working, liberally-educated, social, environmentally aware and ultimately integrated human

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

being' and the school achieves this well. The core curriculum includes Norwegian, English, mathematics, an additional modern foreign language, natural science, arts and crafts and physical education. The school also teaches history, geography and information and communication technology. There is regular careers guidance for older pupils. Apart from the youngest, pupils have English lessons three times a week and some other lessons are delivered in English with Norwegian language support. Pupils with additional needs receive good support from the special educational needs coordinator, and additional support for literacy is very effective for those who are new to reading in English. A suite of laptops is used very effectively in mathematics and other subjects to enable pupils to work at their own pace through linked programmes of study. In the Kindergarten, the curriculum places a great emphasis on the development of children's physical development and social skills, self-confidence and communication. Bilingual staff successfully help children to learn English or, for those with a better grasp of English than Norwegian, help them to learn Norwegian.

The curriculum is well supported by visits. For example, at the time of the inspection a group had just returned from Berlin, another group visited the Tate Modern gallery for an art project and one of the youngest groups went across the road to perform songs in English and Norwegian to residents of a nursing home. For the youngest children, good use is made of the local environment for walks and outings to support learning. The extensive outdoor area, combined with the use of sport and outdoor facilities nearby, supports all pupils' physical development exceptionally well.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers show good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for their subjects and build well on pupils' prior learning. Each pupil is given a weekly timetable of their work, including homework, and this is posted on a password-secure school portal. Parents and carers can enter this and so can support and contribute to their children's learning. There is a good balance of assessment throughout the year, from individual talks with pupils and parents to externally and internally set tests. Termly assessment tasks are used to set targets with pupils so that they are aware of what they are aiming for. The best lessons also include a strong emphasis on pupils' assessments of their own work. However, this is not consistent and the school agrees that there is more work to be done on what the headteacher describes as assessment for 'learning every day'. In the Kindergarten, a good staff-child ratio usually enables staff to step in quickly when children show signs of becoming disengaged. Occasionally though, opportunities are missed to extend children's interest in activities so that early mathematic or scientific concepts can be explored. The very good working relationships and good teamwork used to jointly observe and assess children are slightly limited by the two classes not being located as one unit.

All pupils make good progress as a result of the good teaching and the very good relationships that they have with the school staff. Those in the Kindergarten make good gains in their learning, particularly in their personal and social skills, physical development and communication. The school's own information shows that pupils' achievement is at least in line with, and often above, that found nationally in Norwegian schools. When given the opportunity, pupils show good levels of independence. However, in contrast to the amount of freedom they have in using

the outdoor areas of the school, pupils are often constrained in class and have to wait while teachers give out the resources that they feel the pupils will need. This limits the control pupils have over their own learning. While some lessons provide pupils with opportunities to assess how well they have achieved the lesson's learning objective, this is not always the case. Marking is done consistently but does not provide pupils with guidance about how they could improve their work. As a result, while they know what they are aiming for in the long term, pupils are less clear about what they could do to make as much progress as possible in every lesson.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Parents and carers say that their children enjoy school and this is evident in the very low proportion of unauthorised absence, in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, and in the confident way that pupils respond to staff and to each other. The pupil voice is strong, with regular meetings of an elected pupil council that is represented at meetings of the governing body and has an impact on school improvements. Behaviour is good. Pupils are attentive and respond particularly well to curriculum-linked trips to different places of worship. They have a good knowledge of both their own and others' cultures, for which they show great respect. As a result of their study of the film *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, older pupils wrote very moving poems in which they demonstrated great empathy and understanding. The school supports pupils' acquisition of the key skills of numeracy and literacy effectively and pupils become skilled users of information and communication technology, developing skills which, linked to their mastery of at least two languages, will support their future economic well-being. Those who are thinking about the next stage of their education or are preparing to move back to Norway feel well supported.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school makes satisfactory provision for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. The school's emphasis on outdoor living and learning is very effective; pupils are encouraged to walk, cycle or scooter to school and no-one is daunted by bad weather. The personal, social and health education curriculum promotes different aspects of healthy living well. Procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff are secure. Child protection arrangements are clear and are implemented effectively. All staff have been trained at the appropriate level to fulfil their child protection responsibilities. However, at the time of the inspection, training for the designated child protection officer had not been renewed within the required timescale but has been arranged for the near future. A good number of staff are trained in first aid and the arrangements for fire and other emergencies are sound. New and up-to-date risk assessments are in place for teaching, external areas and for educational visits. Pupils are kept safe in and around the school premises.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school appropriately checks all staff and others to ensure their suitability to work with children. It maintains the required single central register in line with

requirements. Leaders are aware of their responsibilities with regard to ensuring that the appropriate checks are carried out when employing teaching, instrumental or sports staff on a regular basis.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises are generally suitable for their purpose and meet regulatory requirements. However, classroom space is slightly limited and not always best suited to the different age groups. For example, one Kindergarten class is upstairs and so direct access to the outside area is limited. Nevertheless, the buildings and grounds overall provide sufficient areas for learning and play. Furniture, fittings and classrooms are all suitable for the age range of the pupils and the school provides a safe and welcoming learning environment.

Provision of information

The school works hard to keep parents and carers informed of what is happening in the school and their children's learning. All policies and related information are provided, or made available, in line with requirements. The information provided weekly via the school portal is detailed and useful. Parents spoken to during the inspection said that they value their close links with the school. Of those who responded to the Parent View questionnaire, almost all agreed that they receive valuable information from the school.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

Procedures for dealing with complaints are available on request and are compliant with the regulations. There were no formal complaints in the previous year.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- extend the use of day-to-day assessment, including marking, so that pupils are helped to evaluate for themselves how much they have learnt and understand what they need to do to improve their work
- ensure that pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for the choice and use of resources which best support their learning
- ensure that best practice in teaching and in using the learning environment (both inside and out) is shared across the Kindergarten (Early Years Foundation Stage) so that all children make as much progress as they can in every session.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Foreign language all-age school		
Date school opened	January 1982		
Age range of pupils	3–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 57	Girls: 48	Total: 105
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys:	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 4	Girls: 1	Total: 5
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,000-£10,500		
Address of school	28 Arterberry Road London SW20 8AH		
Telephone number	020 8947 6617		
Email address	mail@norwegianschool.org.uk		
Headteacher	Geir Johansen		
Proprietor	The Norwegian School in London Ltd		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 October 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Norwegian School in London, London SW20 8AH

Thank you for helping inspectors to learn about your school. We really enjoyed our visit. It was good to meet you and to see how well you are doing. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found.

The Norwegian School in London provides you with a good education which helps you to make good progress overall in your learning. Some of you make very good or outstanding progress. There is a very good range of things for you to do both in and out of school. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy using the spaces you have to play and work in outside. We were very impressed by how well you all mix.

Good relationships contribute to you feeling safe and well supported in school. Many of you told us how much you enjoy learning in different subjects and we could see that this is so in many of your lessons. However, we think that in some lessons you could make even more progress if you are helped to assess what you have learnt and encouraged to think about how your work could be improved. We have asked the teachers to give you some more guidance when they mark your work. We have also asked them to let you have more independence when setting out and using the resources.

The children who attend the Kindergarten classes enjoy coming to school and soon feel safe. It is difficult for the staff to work as closely together as possible because the classes are on different floors. We have asked your headteacher and the governors to think about ways in which provision could be more consistent for the children in the Kindergarten so that they have the best possible start to their school career.

I hope that you will continue to try hard and do well in the future.

Best wishes

Anne Duffy
Her Majesty's Inspector