

The Norwegian School in London

28 Arterberry Road, Wimbledon, London SW20 8AH

Inspection dates

24–26 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they should, particularly the most able.
- Teachers have not been given any guidance on how to mark work so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- The headteacher has not ensured all staff take responsibility for improving the school.
- The new headteacher has not monitored the quality of teaching or checked pupils' progress.
- The school improvement plan lacks precision in determining how progress will be measured.
- Governors do not have the appropriate expertise and experience to challenge and hold leaders to account in order to move the school forward.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and behave well.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and help to ensure pupils are safe.
- Pupils are well motivated and they enjoy learning both English and Norwegian languages.
- Relationships between pupils are strong. They quickly make new friends and feel at home.
- The range of trips, clubs and visits from outside speakers enriches pupils' learning well.
- Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- The new headteacher has won the trust of the whole school community.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve so that pupils make the best possible progress
 - ensuring teachers' planning sets work at the correct level so that all groups of pupils can make rapid progress
 - developing and implementing a marking policy so that pupils receive appropriate feedback on their work.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership by ensuring:
 - the monitoring of teaching and learning accurately pinpoints any underachievement and actions swift interventions so that pupils make rapid progress
 - development plans have measurable indicators of what a success will look like to improve pupils' achievement
 - responsibilities are distributed more evenly among team leaders so that the school improves quickly.
- The school must meet the following independent standards:
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The school is committed to teaching both English and Norwegian languages and culture which prepares pupils well to become good citizens of the world.
- Although pupils' attainment is above average, achievement is not good, because pupils do not make consistently good progress in all subjects. Also, leaders have not ensured that all the requirements are met for pupils' personal development and welfare.
- Leaders do not assess pupils when they enter the school and this makes it difficult to measure their progress accurately. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicate that pupils' progress is too variable and requires improvement. A high proportion of pupils enter and leave the school at different times and leaders have not been actively measuring and recording their progress. As a result, many pupils have not made sufficient progress.
- The newly appointed headteacher has sole responsibility for running the school and does not have a senior team. As a result, she has been unable to monitor the school's performance effectively and is not able to show clearly how much progress pupils are making.
- Staff set consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and personal development and consequently pupils behave well and have good and caring relationships with both peers and adults.
- The school implements the Norwegian curriculum and has appropriate schemes of work. English is taught as an additional language to all pupils and many are fully bilingual speakers. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils learn about both cultures and, as a result, pupils have developed a secure understanding of both Norwegian and British values. A wide range of extra-curricular trips, clubs and visitors contribute well to pupils' overall development.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how democracy works in different countries. Also, they are given many opportunities through religious education to learn about others' and their own faiths and cultures. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are not robust and require improvement. Checks on pupils' skills and abilities when they enter the school are weak and, as a result, it is not possible to measure how much progress pupils make. Pupils' above-average attainment in Norwegian tests sometimes hides their underachievement.
- The school does not have a marking policy and teachers have devised their own systems to check pupils' work. As a result, pupils are often confused because there is no consistent approach for teachers to show how they can improve their work.
- All policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection meet requirements, and have been updated to reflect the Secretary of State's latest guidance. Norwegian policies and practices for pupils' welfare are similar to the British statutory guidance. The child protection designated officer has been trained to the required standard. All staff receive child protection training annually and this year's update also contains training on how to support pupils against radicalisation and the exploitation of women. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are carried out rigorously.
- Parents and staff are highly appreciative of the work of the school. All parents would recommend this school to others and agree that it keeps their children safe. Pupils are very happy and say that people are very caring; particularly the older pupils are good at looking after the younger children.
- The school improvement plan indicates priorities, timescales and persons responsible to bring about improvements. However, there is lack of clarity in how progress will be measured. The person responsible for all the improvements is the headteacher. Responsibilities are not delegated to other members of staff.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met for leadership and management of the school's work, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are committed to helping the school to improve.
 - However, they do not have the necessary skills, confidence and experience in educational matters to challenge and hold leaders to account for the work of the school in order to bring about improvements.
 - Training has been planned to help governors to understand their roles and responsibilities so that they can fulfil their statutory duties.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teachers do not always have high expectations for pupils' learning. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to challenge the most-able and older pupils as tasks are not set at the correct level. This slows their progress.
- Work in pupils' books indicates that they make expected progress. In English, pupils complete comprehension activities accurately and show good reading skills and understanding of the text. However, they receive few opportunities to develop their written communication skills. As a result, this reduces the amount of progress they are able to make.
- In mathematics, work in books is acknowledged but little guidance is given on how to develop pupils' mastery of mathematical skills. Pupils are asked to check their own answers and correct mistakes. This is because there is no school marking policy and teachers use their own individual systems, which are not helpful in extending pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching is too variable and requires improvement. In good lessons, teachers give tasks that well match pupils' ages and abilities. For example, in one English lesson, after reading the Christmas Story, the teacher gave easier activities for pupils who learn slowly. They were also well supported by the Norwegian-speaking teacher to explain work in Norwegian if needed. These pupils made good progress. This is not consistent across the school.
- In almost all lessons, relationships are good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and engage quickly with their work with little or no disruption. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is consistently good and, even when the work is too easy, they sit quietly without disturbing others.
- Pupils who are new to learning English receive effective support from teachers who speak both Norwegian and English. As a result, the large majority make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive helpful one-to-one support, and as a result make similar progress to their classmates. Parents are fully involved in the annual review process. They understand the strategies used for helping their child to learn which they can use at home. As a result, they have a good understanding of the progress their children are making.
- There is a strong focus on teaching English, Norwegian and mathematics. Other subjects are taught in line with the Norwegian curriculum requirements. Effective learning was observed in music, physical education (PE), science and religious education. The outside science specialist engaged pupils extremely well. All pupils were fascinated with the topics on forces and electricity, and how substances change as different mixtures are added. As a result, pupils made good progress and enjoyed their learning.
- Leaders have ensured all the independent school standards for teaching, learning and assessment are met.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are confident and most have positive attitudes to learning. If any pupil becomes distracted, staff are skilled in re-engaging them in their learning to complete the tasks given.
- All parents and staff who completed the survey agree that pupils are safe, happy and well looked after. Pupils say that there is no bullying at the school, and if it ever happens they know staff would deal with it swiftly. Pupils understand about different types of bullying, such as cyberbullying and homophobic remarks, and know how to keep themselves safe while using the internet.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance and punctuality are above average. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school is committed to providing equal opportunities. Pupils of different ages and from different classes work and play together amicably and relationships are strong. New pupils who join the school other than at the usual times are welcomed and well looked after by their classmates. Younger pupils say that older pupils are caring and look after them well.
- Leaders have updated all safety policies and these are available to parents on the school's website. All staff are appropriately trained and this training is updated yearly. Currently, the school has only one trained designated child protection officer. The new headteacher is getting training to be the deputy child protection officer.
- Pupils reported that school works effectively to keep them safe. The older pupils stated that, because of the danger from extremist elements in society, the school has taken the precaution of taking pupils for Christmas celebrations to the Norwegian Church in London by coach rather than travel by underground.

- The key staff are suitably trained in first aid and fire safety.
- Currently the school has not ensured that suitable washing facilities are provided in the medical room. As a result, not all of the independent standards are met for pupils' personal development and welfare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and parents, staff and pupils agree. Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are polite and courteous to each other and playtimes and lunchtimes are calm.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Even when lessons are too easy for some, they still sit quietly and wait for others to complete tasks. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff and this is used to encourage pupils to behave well and engage in their lessons. There have been no exclusions from the school for many years.
- Leaders have ensured that a full range of policies and procedures is in place, so that the independent school standards for this aspect of the school's work are met.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' attainment in Norwegian test results is above the average. Observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work in their books indicates that progress in English and mathematics is as expected.
- Progress in Norwegian language is good, as is indicated in the school records. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education, which is taught in English, is good. However, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills in these lessons.
- Pupils' speaking skills in English are good. Most pupils from Year 2 onwards can hold a good conversation in English with peers and adults. Some pupils have lived abroad in countries such as the USA and have a good command of English, where some others have one English-speaking parent and their English language skills are strong.
- Pupils achieve well in other subjects such as personal, social and health education, music and PE.
- Younger pupils learn to sing rhymes and songs in both languages and most know the words, showing good command of vocabulary and speaking skills. In the science demonstration led by an outside specialist, older pupils showed good understanding of the concepts being learnt in English.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school requirements related to pupils' outcomes are met.

School details

Unique reference number	102693
Inspection number	10006058
DfE registration number	315/6072

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Foreign language
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Number of part-time pupils	0
Chair	Age Hellem
Headteacher	Heidi Lindhagen
Telephone number	0208 947 6617
Website	www.norwegianschool.org.uk
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 October 2012

Information about this school

- The Norwegian School is an independent school registered for 130 boys and girls aged 6–16 years. The school was established in 1981 for Norwegian expatriate pupils who are temporarily residing in London. Originally, the school was registered for pupils aged from 3–16. However, in August 2014, the Norwegian Kindergarten in London registered itself separately from the main school to educate children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, and did not form part of this inspection.
- There are 103 pupils on roll with seven pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school is non-denominational and follows the Norwegian National Curriculum. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language, but some have fluency as they have one parent who is an English speaker, or they have lived in other English-speaking countries, such as the USA.
- Many pupils enter and leave the school at different times during the year and very few stay for more than two years. Sometimes, two to three pupils will join and leave the school in the space of a month.
- 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'.
- The school is a registered charity with a board of six directors.
- The headteacher joined the school in August 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed 10 lessons in a range of subjects. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher. All teachers spoke English, and if needed they translated Norwegian into English for inspectors.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, class teachers and three governors.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website, key documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding and child protection, and scrutinised students' files and the school's information about students' attainment and progress. Where documents were written in Norwegian, the headteacher assisted with translation.
- The views from 14 staff questionnaires were considered.
- There were 44 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View). Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers before school.
- Formal discussions were held with three groups of pupils and inspectors also talked to pupils informally.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Brian Simber

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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