

The Swedish School

82 Lonsdale Road, London SW13 9JS

Inspection dates	2–3 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The leadership and management of senior leaders are outstanding. Together with the governors, they ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- A rich and stimulating Swedish and English curriculum ensures that pupils excel in all areas of learning, including their personal, social and health development. An outstanding range of extra-curricular activities further enriches pupils' experiences.
- The new headteacher and the new deputy headteacher are highly ambitious. Their checking of the school's work is accurate and rigorous. This leads to effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and the outcomes for pupils.
- The provision for the sixth form is outstanding. Learners have many opportunities to study a very wide range of subjects and they attain standards above the Swedish national average. They receive excellent careers guidance.
- Pupils begin school with varying levels of knowledge and skills in Swedish and in English. They make rapid progress in both these languages because teaching matches their needs and skills very well.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. They say that they feel safe and are well aware of how to stay safe from any radicalisation or extremist views.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted highly effectively. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding of fundamental British values when they visit places such as the Houses of Parliament, or learn about all the major faiths represented in the country.
- The early years provision is good. Children make outstanding progress in reading, writing and speaking in English and Swedish. However, their progress in other areas of learning is not yet outstanding.
- Parents are very happy with their children's education and safety.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning sets work at the correct level so that all children make rapid progress in all areas of learning, in line with their outstanding progress in English and Swedish.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The leadership and management of the new headteacher and the new deputy headteacher are outstanding. They form the senior leadership team and share an ambition for excellence. Most of the school staff work well together, ably supported by the senior leaders. Since the arrival of the senior leaders, the roles and responsibilities of the middle leaders are developing well.
- Senior leaders monitor teaching robustly and systematically; as a result, the match of teaching activities to pupils' needs is outstanding overall. In early years, the quality of teaching in English and Swedish is equally strong, but less so in other areas of learning.
- Senior leaders monitor the performance of teachers rigorously, ensuring that pay progression is based on merit. Leaders are ambitious and keen to improve teaching further so that even more is outstanding.
- The school's leaders have high expectations of pupils' personal development and academic achievement. They rigorously check pupils' progress on a continual basis against the modules taught. These assessments and their next steps for learning are placed in pupils' individual files on the website, which only their parents can access. This provides parents with excellent information about their children's progress on a continuous basis. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are highly effective and link to the Swedish curriculum requirements.
- The curriculum is the strength of the school. It is rich and extremely well planned; detailed schemes of work in all areas give due emphasis to Swedish, English, science and mathematics. Pupils enjoy the wide range of subjects on offer. They reflect on what they have learned, what they need to learn next and what will help them to learn. As one pupil remarked, 'I would do better in my biology if I had access to a human skeleton in the class.'
- Leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding and learners receive a rich educational experience, which includes opportunities to study on university premises. They receive careers guidance from a specialist who comes from Sweden. Visitors, such as multi-national company officers, prepare pupils well for the next steps in education and career opportunities. All pupils go on to university education.
- The school has been granted exemption by the Department for Education (DfE) from the early years learning and development requirements. Nevertheless, all areas of learning are taught according to the Swedish curriculum requirements. Children make exceptional progress in learning English and Swedish. However, their progress in other areas is not as rapid. This is because teachers do not plan work to match children's needs as well in other areas as they do in developing children's communication skills in Swedish and English.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development highly effectively. Pupils learn to understand democracy and the principles of equality of opportunity through group discussions, visits to places of worship, theatres and museums. They discuss the news and learn about radicalisation and extremism. One pupil remarked: 'We are aware of the extremist attacks in Sweden and Paris. We are also aware that we should not blame all the Muslims. Most Muslims are not extremists.'
- The school prepares audited accounts and submits them to the Swedish National Agency of Education, which approves all grants received from Sweden.
- The response to the online parents' questionnaire indicates that parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school's work, including that of the new leaders. Most staff are happy to work in the school.
- Leaders, including the governors, have ensured that all the required regulations for independent schools are met.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governors are highly knowledgeable and committed to improving the school. They have the necessary skills and expertise to challenge leaders robustly and hold them to account to bring about further improvements.
 - The governors have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have achieved a good balance in teaching Swedish and English throughout the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
 - The welfare, safety and security of pupils are a priority. All policies and procedures are effectively implemented to ensure that the provision is of the highest quality. These policies take account of the statutory guidance contained in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015)*. Policies are well

communicated to parents via the school's website. All staff have received appropriate training, including the safeguarding designated leads.

- Leaders ensure that all the required checks are made on staff before they start work at the school.
- Fire checks evacuations are completed termly and an appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid.
- The admissions and destinations of pupils who join and leave the school are accurately recorded.

Material Change

- The DfE, the registration authority for independent schools, asked for this inspection to consider a material change request from the school. The school wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils from 250 to 300 in the existing premises. Considering that the premises are large and that all the safeguarding checks for the welfare and safety of pupils are in place, the DfE is recommended to grant the school's request to increase the maximum number to 300 pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use information about pupils' different abilities to plan lessons that are appropriately challenging and motivate pupils to make rapid gains in their learning. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their communication, reading and writing skills. As a result, they make rapid progress in learning Swedish and English. Pupils are encouraged to use these skills across subjects.
- Teachers ask effective questions, which encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and think deeply about their responses. Pupils are given opportunities to work things out for themselves and are encouraged to excel. This motivates them to achieve at the highest level. Pupils remarked, 'We reflect on our work and know what we need to do to further improve it.'
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and bring their own commitment and enthusiasm for the subject being taught. Pupils share their enthusiasm and this enables them to make outstanding progress. In one science lesson, younger pupils were experimenting to find out if air existed in water. They very proudly showed inspectors their books, which had information on how they predicted, tested and wrote findings and results. They explained their work previously covered in electricity and showed a very good understanding of the need of a full circuit to light a bulb.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly against the Swedish grade system. This information is provided regularly to pupils and, as a result, they know what they can do and what they need to do next.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and this results in pupils having positive attitudes to learning. They engage quickly with their work and lessons proceed without any disruption.
- The school's leaders ensure that all the independent school standards in this area are met.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptionally high. They are confident and self-assured pupils who reflect on their own learning; they typically know what they need to improve and how they are going to improve it. They are confident to tell teachers what help they need to further improve their knowledge and skills.
- Highly positive attitudes to learning are evident in most lessons. Pupils have high expectations of their own work and want to succeed. They work hard to achieve their goals. Pupils work exceptionally well in pairs or small groups. They are proud of their work and are keen to explain what they have completed. This was seen in a mathematics lesson, where pupils were comparing heavy and light objects; they completed the work in Swedish but happily communicated their findings in English.
- Pupils' relationships with adults and other pupils in the school are based on mutual respect. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and to each other. They work collaboratively and amicably. At lunchtime, they sit together to share a healthy meal cooked on the premises. This time is used to chat sociably in a calm and caring environment, which encourages the development of social skills. After the meal, many pupils willingly help to clear away without being asked.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep safe from any type of bullying, including any form of cyber bullying, and radicalisation and extremism. The school's curriculum discretely touches on safety issues through all the subject areas.
- The school's leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards for welfare, health and safety are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school sets the highest expectations for behaviour and, as a result, pupils know what is expected of them and respond extremely well. Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour, and disruption to lessons, as a pupil remarked, 'never happens'. Pupils have a clear understanding of the expectations in lessons and around the school, resulting in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. This has a strong impact on their ability to achieve highly in all aspects of their schoolwork.
- Pupils are very tolerant of each other's mistakes; an example observed by inspectors involved pupils bumping into one another with water and working together to tidy up the spill.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is shown in their high attendance and high levels of punctuality. They learn to be responsible and are well prepared for life in Britain or anywhere else they go.
- The school has an extensive range of policies in place. These are implemented extremely effectively to ensure that any partisan or extremist views are not held. As one pupil explained, 'We think for ourselves, debate the issues in our heads and do not just do as others say.'
- All the independent school standards are met.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding in all subjects, for all abilities and in all classes in the main school. Activities are planned that challenge pupils and support their learning toward outstanding outcomes, including more-able pupils. Children in the early years classes make outstanding progress in learning English and Swedish and good progress in other areas.
- Pupils' progress in the primary-aged classes is outstanding in all subjects. The school's assessment information indicates that pupils make outstanding progress and attain above national average standards in mathematics, English and Swedish in the Swedish national examinations. Pupils' work in their books and in lessons confirms this.
- A focus on giving a very good grounding in the subjects such as English, mathematics and Swedish helps pupils to make outstanding progress in all subjects. This was particularly noticeable in technology where pupils learn new vocabulary in Swedish and are able to translate it into English. They could explain terms, such as 'hem' and 'seam', clearly.
- Pupils' achievement in music is a strength of the school's curriculum. The superbly equipped music room is used highly effectively to stimulate and motivate pupils. Pupils show exceptional achievement in moving and expressively interpreting rhythms with gusto, modulation and control. They sing and dance with confidence. Pupils observe videos made of their own work to analyse and then suggest ways of improving it for the next performance.
- Secondary-aged pupils achieve exceptionally well in all subjects and they achieve results that are well above the Swedish national averages in English, Swedish, mathematics, sciences and social studies. Pupils read widely and use the school library to extend their reading skills.
- Pupils have outstanding communication skills and are able to communicate in English fluently through the whole curriculum. This prepares them extremely well for their future careers. Those who choose to go back to Sweden are well prepared to fit in to the school system and those who stay have excellent skills in English to be prepared for life in Great Britain.

Early years provision

is good

- The school has been granted exemption from all aspects of Early Years Foundation Stage so that children can follow the Swedish curriculum and learn English as an additional language. Children are taught in Swedish and make good progress in all their areas of learning. This is because a wide range of activities supports their learning effectively.

- Children begin school with varying levels of knowledge and skills in English and Swedish. They make outstanding progress and some have started communicating in both languages. An outstanding focus on teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) skills in both Swedish and English is helping children to improve their reading skills. Some more-able children can identify words from using the initial sounds of letters.
- Teachers match activities to the children's knowledge and skills effectively and this supports good progress in other areas of learning. Personal development is strong and children are learning to play amicably in groups. They behave well, take turns and share resources fairly with their classmates.
- There is a good balance between staff-led activities and those chosen by children. Teachers engage in play when children choose activities and use these as opportunities to extend and assess children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers engage well in supporting and extending learning when children draw, write letters and play chess. This is an improvement from the previous inspection.
- A further area for improvement from the previous inspection was to more closely link observations of children's learning to expected goals and use this to record what the next step in learning might be. The school has made good progress in this area and is now recording children's achievements effectively, as seen when children were engaged in construction, printing and playing phonics games.
- Children's work recorded in their 'learning journeys' indicates that they make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff now regularly use photographs as evidence to show children's progress. This was a recommendation in the previous inspection report.
- Parents are happy with the provision, particularly the progress children make in their communication skills. They receive good information about their children's progress and the standards achieved. Parents are happy that their views are taken into account. As one remarked, 'We work closely with the school and if we give any suggestions, they are taken on board.'
- Children are well prepared to manage risks and keep them safe. There is a good focus on teaching literacy and numeracy skills, which prepares children well to meet higher challenges in Year 1.
- The leadership and management of the provision are good. Assessment procedures are improved and are now good. However, they are not used robustly enough to closely match work to children's needs to enable them to make outstanding progress in other areas of learning as they do in English and Swedish.
- The school's leaders ensure that all the requirements for the early years provision are met.

Sixth form provision

is outstanding

- The sixth form leader is highly ambitious and passionate about developing provision and standards even further. In the short time she has been in the school, she has rigorously monitored teaching in all subjects and has supported staff where it was not consistently good. This has a positive impact in improving the quality of teaching.
- Learners make outstanding progress because teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan dynamic lessons, which motivate learners, as was seen in one physics lesson. This was conducted in a well-equipped laboratory in part of the university faculty. Learners were highly engaged and focused on learning about static electricity. Learners have high levels of communication skills in both languages; they explain their learning in English clearly though studying in Swedish.
- Exceptionally insightful questioning by teachers encourages learners to reflect on their previous learning and connect their ideas to the topic being studied. This is particularly evident in English and religious education.
- Teachers check learners' knowledge and understanding systematically and effectively, and provide clearly directed support that leads to outstanding learning. Learners' attainment in their chosen subjects at the end of the sixth form is consistently higher than the Swedish national average.
- Learners display outstanding attitudes to learning. They work extremely well in groups, researching collaboratively and sharing ideas. They take responsibility for their own learning and show high levels of engagement in lessons. Their behaviour is always impeccable whether in lessons or out of lessons. Their attendance and punctuality are high.
- Learners feel safe and know how to keep safe and healthy. They have many opportunities to visit places of educational interest locally, nationally and internationally. They have visited Sweden, France and Spain in relation to their studies. They understand life in Britain and the societies of other countries.
- Learners are clear about their career plans, which are realistically ambitious. The school provides

appropriate programmes of study that highly support learners' outcomes. They are given high-quality careers advice through specialists coming from Sweden and officers from a multinational company to give an idea about their businesses. Learners have opportunities to design products, which are evaluated by the judges in the style of 'Dragon's Den'. The advice that is given is always impartial. All learners are planning to go to universities in Britain and abroad. They currently study in university premises that prepare them extremely well for the life of university.

- Leaders have made sure that all the independent school standards are met.

School details

Unique reference number	102948
Inspection number	10008884
DfE registration number	318/6076

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	All-age school with post-16 boarding arrangements
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	127
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	95
Proprietor	Swedish School Society in London Ltd.
Chair	Richard Jonsson
Headteacher	Annika Simonsson Bergqvist
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,500–£9,000
Annual fees (boarders)	£11,500
Telephone number	020 8741 1751
Website	www.swedishschool.org.uk
Email address	office@swedishschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 March 2010

Information about this school

- The Swedish School is a non-selective independent school that provides Swedish education with considerable proportion of lessons in English.
- The school is one of a number of Swedish schools abroad. It opened in 1907 to provide education to the children of the representatives of the Swedish organisations and companies located in Britain so that they could continue their schooling within the Swedish education system while living in London. It moved in 1976 to the current site in Barnes, in the Royal Borough of Richmond, which now houses the pre-school, primary and secondary schools. The sixth form is located in Richmond at the American International University, which is 30 minutes' drive away from the main school.
- The school admits pupils from age 3 to 19 years. There are currently 278 pupils on roll. There are 26 children under the age of five, 12 of whom are in receipt of public funding under the government's nursery education scheme.
- There are 127 learners in the sixth form and 95 of these board locally with host families. These are exchange pupils who will spend six months or one year out of the three years in the sixth form. In the sixth form, mobility is high; very few pupils stay more than a year.

- There are no pupils with a statement of educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school aims to 'produce sociable, independent, responsible and academically motivated students in a safe and secure learning environment'.
- The school follows the Swedish curriculum and the Swedish grading criteria in accordance with the requirements of The Swedish National Agency for Education.
- Currently, the school is registered for a maximum of 250 pupils but currently has 278 pupils on roll. The school has made a material change application to increase the roll to 300 pupils.
- The school does not use any off-site provision.
- The school has no religious affiliation and teaches all major faiths represented in Great Britain.
- The school is a charitable organisation run by the Swedish School Society in London.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher both joined the school at the beginning of the academic year in August 2015. Both have considerable experience in their respective roles in other schools in Sweden. The new deputy headteacher is also the sixth form leader.

Information about this inspection

- Discussions took place with the three governors, including the Chair of Governors. Inspectors also spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and three middle leaders. Meetings were held with primary and secondary pupils and sixth form learners.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders, looked at the school's welfare and safety arrangements, and toured the premises at the main school and sixth form sites. All the independent school standards were checked.
- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, and two learning walks through six classes were conducted. The vast majority of these were conducted jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Pupils' work in their books and pre-school children's 'learning journeys' were evaluated. All staff in the main school and most staff in the sixth form were observed teaching.
- Teachers' planning and assessment records were analysed.
- The behaviour of pupils was observed throughout the inspection. Records of pupils' behaviour were examined.
- School policies and other documentation were examined on the website and through hard copies presented in the school.
- The views expressed in 40 responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed. The inspectors considered the views of 44 parents who responded to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Avtar Sherri	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

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