

The Norwegian School in London

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	315/6072
Unique Reference Number	102693
Inspection number	329563
Inspection dates	27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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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, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

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. There are currently 122 pupils, taught in six class groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises two classes for 30 children. Admission to the school is non-selective. The school is a registered charity with a Board of three members. The school was last inspected in January 2005.

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'.

Evaluation of the school

The Norwegian school provides a good level of education for its pupils in a friendly and supportive environment. Relationships are good across the school and this encourages pupils to grow in confidence. Their behaviour is excellent in all classes. In line with its aims, the school places a strong emphasis on helping pupils to develop their independence and to evaluate their own work. The procedures for safeguarding pupils' and health and safety systems do not meet regulations and these aspects of the school's provision are inadequate. A number of regulations are not met. The school has a clear complaints policy but this is not communicated sufficiently to parents in the school's handbook, prospectus or website, nor does it contain clear timescales that explain when complaints will be dealt with and findings reported.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is good. It is based on the Norwegian curriculum and the school is embedding the recently introduced 'L-97' curriculum into its planning. This ensures that progression routes are clear and well defined. The staff are a close

team with good levels of communication. Through their good knowledge of individual pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they are quickly able to identify when a pupil needs additional support. A well qualified and knowledgeable teacher works effectively with small groups of pupils so that they make good progress. Pupils appreciate the wide range of subjects offered and have good quality opportunities in a well balanced curriculum. Weekly English sessions help pupils to establish a good command of the language and several speak it fluently.

Teaching is good throughout the school and is characterised by the good relationships and the positive attitudes that pupils show towards their work. Teachers' good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm have a clear impact on pupils' levels of interest and enjoyment. Consequently, by the time pupils leave school, they achieve results in line with, and frequently above, Norwegian averages in the main subjects. Teachers set tasks with clear instructions that contain suggestions on approach and content. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and to make their own assessments on their progress. Work is carefully set to meet individuals' abilities and teachers provide varying levels of support so that all pupils make good progress. The school makes innovative use of information and communication technology to give parents a detailed weekly plan of each pupil's lessons and homework. Parents are able enter information on to the system in return and are kept very well informed on their children's progress. More formal assessment of learning takes place in each of the main subjects each term. Pupils are fully involved in setting challenging targets for improvement based on these results and these are shared with their parents through formal meetings and the computer profile. Arrangements to identify pupils with additional academic needs are good and pupils receive appropriate support. The school makes good use of the Norwegian Pedagogical Psychological Service for schools abroad.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupil's personal development and spiritual moral and social development is good. They show a positive attitude to school and are have good levels of concentration and application. The relaxed atmosphere, good relationships, and good quality educational provision help them to achieve academic success. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are courteous and friendly to each other and respectful to adults. They are well versed in using their initiative to complete tasks and to take responsibility for their own learning and this helps to develop mature personalities. Teachers expect pupils to contribute to discussions and to explain their opinions and this encourages them to develop into articulate and thoughtful individuals.

Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the running of the school through the school's council and their opinions and views have led to improvements in the shape of a modern and much appreciated adventure playground. The adventure playground and well-resourced school grounds contribute to energetic playtimes and allow pupils of all ages to mix well and to enjoy each other's company. The school has developed close links with a neighbouring school but pupils voiced their desire

for further opportunities to widen their circle of friends within the local community. The school makes good use of trips to central London and visits to places of worship to widen pupils' understanding of other cultures. This helps them to acquire a sound knowledge of English institutions and public bodies.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are inadequate. The majority of staff have been cleared to teach by the Norwegian educational system and have certificates of good conduct. However not all staff and proprietors have been subjected to the appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks required in England and the school has not established a system to formally record the completion of these checks. The school's systems for child protection are weak. There is a written policy but this has not been fully implemented and staff are inadequately trained. Parents and pupils are unaware of procedures for reporting child protection concerns because these are not clearly communicated to them. A number of actions to reduce the risk of fire are carried out and these have been formally recorded but checks on the safety of portable electrical appliances have not been completed in the last year. The school has made a number of adjustments to the building and curriculum to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but has not drawn up a written three year plan to increase the accessibility of the school for these learners.

All staff show a high regard for the day-to-day well being of pupils. Relationships are good throughout the school and staff go out of their way to listen and respond to pupils' academic concerns. The school is an inclusive community and in this calm, supportive environment instances of bullying are extremely rare. Pupils are well supervised on trips outside school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for within a warm and nurturing environment which contributes to their outstanding personal development and behaviour. All adults help children to settle in quickly by providing a high level of individual support and reassurance. The leadership and management of the EYFS are good and this is reflected in the children's obvious pleasure in being at school, their good achievement and close, mutually trusting working relationships. Parents are pleased with the work of the school and inspectors agree that children feel safe and happy. The school follows the Norwegian curriculum and this is adapted to meet children's needs well. The informal nature of this curriculum and generous levels of staffing pave the way for the effective development of children's language and social skills. Children have outstanding access to outdoor activities. This helps them to make good progress in their physical and creative development and makes a strong contribution to their learning in other areas. From these activities they learn about nature and the wider community by observing, for example, the passing of the seasons and the work of people such as the park rangers.

Nursery staff follow Norwegian pedagogy which delays the systematic teaching of early reading and writing skills. Instead, adults place a strong emphasis on fostering language development. For example, through planned practical activities such as wrapping up silk paintings that have been prepared for their parents, children extend their speaking and listening skills and range of vocabulary. They thoroughly enjoy these opportunities and are very relaxed in each other's and adults' company. In line with more stringent national requirements on data protection the school does not formally record children's abilities on entry to the nursery but evidence indicates that they make good overall progress in relation to their starting points.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- implement its written child protection policies and ensure that all staff are appropriately trained (paragraph 3(2)(b))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- carry out enhanced CRB checks in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- formally record in a single register checks on identity, qualifications, enhanced CRB clearance, suitability to work in a school and certificate of good conduct for all staff, members of the board or supply staff. The register should include the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraphs 4C(2,3,6 and 7))
- ensure that the single central register is kept in either electronic or hard copy so that it is capable of being reproduced in legible form (paragraph 4C(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures to inform parents (standard 6) and must:

- ensure that parents are aware of the availability of the particulars of policies relating to child protection (paragraph 6(2)(h))
- ensure that parents are aware of the availability of the details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school together with details of the

number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- ensure that the complaints policy sets out clear timescales for the management of complaints (paragraph 7(c)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

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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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	✓			
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?			✓	
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		✓		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		✓		

School details

Name of school	The Norwegian School in London		
DCSF number	315/6072		
Unique reference number	102693		
Type of school	Foreign language all-age school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	9 March 1982		
Age range of pupils	3-16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 61	Girls: 60	Total: 121
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,500 - £8,600		
Address of school	28 Arterberry Road Wimbledon London SW20 8AH		
Telephone number	0208 947 6617		
Email address	mail@dnslondon.com		
Headteacher	Mr Per Ole Pihlstrøm		
Proprietor	The Norwegian School in London		
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI		
Dates of inspection	27 November 2008		