



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Dania Scandinavian School**

**March 2023**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Dania Scandinavian School			
<b>DfE number</b>	206/6000			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1153166			
<b>Address</b>	Dania Scandinavian School Curran House 3 Highbury Crescent London N5 1RN			
<b>Telephone number</b>	07933 619674			
<b>Email address</b>	admin@daniashool.com			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Katie Howard			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Peter Melbye			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Dania School			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	26			
	<b>Preschool</b>	17	<b>Reception</b>	4
	<b>Primary</b>	5		
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28 to 30 March 2023			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Dania Scandinavian School is a coeducational day school. It is governed by a board of trustees. The school was founded by local families in 2013 and has pupils and teachers from both Scandinavian and non-Scandinavian backgrounds. The school moved to new premises in 2022. A new head was appointed in September 2022.
- 1.2 The school has three classes. The preschool class provides for children aged between 2 and 4 years and the rest of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made up of the Reception class. The primary class comprises pupils from Year 1 upwards. The classes will sometimes mix for certain activities during the school week.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.3 The school aims to inspire the pupils to be active, confident, responsible and successful individuals by creating a learning environment that empowers through engaging the whole child.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional families living in or around North London. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and none have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many pupils speak both English, Danish or other Scandinavian languages and 21 have English as an additional language (EAL).

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards.** The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

### **PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

### **PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

### **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

**2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

**2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

**2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

### 3. Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

**The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.**

Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Primary	Years 1, 2 and 3

#### Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

- Pupils have decidedly positive attitudes towards their learning and development.
- Pupils are good independent thinkers, fostered by their teachers and supporting the school's ethos.
- Pupils are confident speakers and good listeners.
- Older pupils' extended writing skills and their use of information and communication technology (ICT) are less well developed.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils are strong decision-makers, fostered by the school ethos of allowing pupils to think for themselves.
- Pupils display a natural self-confidence promoted by a school atmosphere where they feel safe, secure and happy.
- Pupils display excellent social skills and understand the part they have to play in creating a harmonious school environment.
- Pupils' excellent moral awareness stems from the support given to them by their teachers and school leaders.

#### Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Strengthen the progress of the older pupils by improving assessment and tracking arrangements to reliably inform next steps in learning.
- Strengthen pupils' extended writing skills.
- Strengthen pupils' skills and knowledge in ICT to support their learning.



## The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Children in the EYFS reach good levels of development meeting the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning, as well as in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics. Careful tracking in the EYFS ensures that the next steps in the children's learning are readily identified and this, in turn, strengthens their outcomes. Progress data and tracking of attainment for primary pupils is less well developed. As a result, their outcomes are not as strong. Pupils meet age-related expectations in mathematics but are below such levels in English, especially in relation to their writing skills. This is reflected in the quality of pupils' writing in workbooks. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents who responded feel that their children's particular individual educational needs are met effectively.
- 3.6 Pupils develop a wide range of skills across the curriculum, supported by the project-based learning for primary pupils promoted by the school's leadership and management. Pupils are able to develop their understanding across the curriculum and their skills are strengthened because they can see how all elements interlock and support one another. In lessons observed, pupils were keen to share knowledge learnt as shown in the project work lesson where pupils were highly successful in explaining their recent science experiment regarding what is needed for plants to grow. Older pupils demonstrated high levels of understanding during their project work on dams following World Water Day learning. They examined dam structures and waterwheels, successfully linking learning from their science work on forces, and explained why the blade needed to be in a central position to catch as much water as possible. Children in the EYFS develop a range of knowledge and skills through the rich variety of activities available. Child-initiated learning sits seamlessly alongside that which is more teacher directed, ensuring that the children remain fully engaged and develop their understanding to a strong level. Pupils of all ages make good use of all outdoor space, whether they be outside the nursery or in local parks. These opportunities enable pupils of all ages to develop their learning through a range of exciting opportunities, a view that is shared by all parents who responded to the questionnaire.
- 3.7 Pupils are confident speakers and generally listen well. In the EYFS, the youngest follow instructions carefully and understand the importance of being respectful when someone else is contributing. Pupils of all ages are given time and space to learn how they should communicate with each other as well as being provided with opportunities to display performance skills to a wider audience. This includes assemblies, where the pupils share their work with each other and with their families. In discussions with inspectors, pupils demonstrated that they could expertly share their thoughts and ideas, for example, when describing a picture of a boat trip to Denmark as part of a family holiday. Pupils benefit from a school culture and ethos, promoted by leadership and management, that values their unique contributions. Children in the EYFS develop their phonic skills well and show the skills necessary as emergent writers. However, writing skills for older pupils are not as strong. They sometimes lack the necessary skills to be able to pull their thoughts and ideas together in an engaging manner using a variety of styles and approaches. Pupils reading skills develop well as they move through the school.
- 3.8 From an early age pupils develop a strong understanding of number. Children in Reception are able to use mathematical vocabulary successfully, such as when comparing two numbers explaining which was bigger or smaller and which was more or less than another. On another occasion, children showed strong mathematical understanding of both number and shape as they played a triangular tile game where they had to match up certain numerical sequences. This depth of understanding increases as pupils move through the primary phase. Pupils are able to demonstrate the key fundamentals relating to areas such as place value, fractions and decimals. For example, they are able to show a good understanding of how to represent multiplication and division using rows and columns using repeated addition and formal written methods and knowledge of times table questions. Their mathematical development is supported by a scheme of work that provides clear structure and continuity ensuring that pupils are working at an age-appropriate level. Pupils understand their numeracy skills and when

given the opportunity can apply them elsewhere in their learning, often through the topic-based learning approach.

- 3.9 Pupils enjoy using ICT but there are certain areas of the ICT curriculum where the pupils' knowledge is less well developed. These include coding, control measuring and the use of specific applications which would assist the pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils understand how ICT skills suitably support their project-based learning, such as through researching on a particular theme. There was limited evidence of how pupils further develop their skills as they move through the primary phase of the school.
- 3.10 Pupils develop good study skills, particularly independent learning through their day-to-day activities. Staff encourage the pupils to take ownership of their learning. They are taught to think for themselves, hypothesising what might happen and analysing what has happened. For example, children in the preschool class showed an excellent understanding of how the different angles of a slope affected the speed and distance covered by their toy cars. They showed good investigational and collaborative skills. They could analyse the fact that when using a piece of guttering at a steep angle the cars went faster because the surface was smooth and that the sides kept the car in a straight line, just like a slide in the park. In the questionnaire, all parents who responded felt that the school equips their children with the team-working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.11 Due to the small numbers in the primary class, pupils' opportunities for success in a broad range of non-academic activities are limited, particularly regarding team games and competitions. However, there are individual achievements such as pupils playing ice hockey, competing in a team with others who may be several years older. School leaders and managers are aware of this and are looking to strengthen this area through linking with other small schools in the area.
- 3.12 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, as demonstrated by children in the Reception class where they were fully engaged in a mathematics activity. These children show a love of learning, enthusiastically working well together. The primary pupils showed strong engagement in project-based learning activities, focusing for long periods of time ensuring that the task was completed to a satisfactory level. Pupils demonstrate resilience during lessons, as seen when younger pupils in primary were learning to play a game linked to their times tables work. Once an understanding of the rules was clear they were ready for action. The school is successful in meeting its aim of empowering the whole child to give of its best.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils display strong levels of recognising their own sense of self, and they realise the importance of this as they apply resilience and build the skills required for successful lives. Pupils develop excellent self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, as was seen throughout pupil interviews and as they moved around the school building and played in the local park. Pupils show mature reflection in relation to their learning and development. Children show great resilience from a young age, as was demonstrated in the preschool class where they tenaciously tried to write their names by tracing over the letters before transferring this to their own work. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their educational lives, fully reflecting the key aims of the school to develop confidence and responsibility, actively promoted by the school's leadership and management.
- 3.15 Pupils are excellent decision-makers due to the toolbox of skills that is developed as they move through the school. Pupils understand the impact of the decisions they make on themselves and on others. They think things through carefully and understand the importance of consequence. Across all year groups, pupils are given many opportunities to make decisions around their learning, including outdoors where they carefully choose equipment to play and climb on. They understand which pieces of apparatus are the ones that suit them best and how high it is safe to climb. Children in the preschool

constantly make informed choices around which activity to follow and what would be the most useful equipment to use. They are able to select from a range of activities and also decide who they would like to play with. They know which of their friends will provide the most positive experience, depending on the task.

- 3.16 Pupils have a good sense of spirituality, whether this be rooted in organised religions or not. Older pupils explore different religions and most recently the primary children engaged in discussion around Christianity and Easter. Pupils also appreciate the non-material aspects of life. They enjoy moments of quiet reflection and school leaders and managers have ensured that mindfulness and reflection are incorporated into the school week. Pupils become fully engrossed in activities where they become totally absorbed in the moment, such as when singing whilst playing on a balance bicycle in the outdoor area or sitting atop of the climbing net and wistfully looking at the surroundings. Pupils at break time were in awe of a squirrel on a tree which they watched for ages, observed its movements and were clearly loving this connection with the natural world.
- 3.17 Pupils respond well to the school culture where promoting morality has a strong focus. Pupils' excellent moral development reflects the school systems put in place by leaders and managers that enable reflection and moderation of behaviours that might be considered inappropriate. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They are respectful of their surroundings and enter class in a calm and courteous manner, acknowledging their peers as they get ready for the day ahead. Pupils display excellent relationships with their teachers and always speak with them respectfully. Pupils' behaviour was also excellent as they crossed the roads and when mixing with members of the public at a local swimming pool. The findings of the inspectors match the views of both pupils and parents in the questionnaires, where all felt that the school promotes positive behaviours.
- 3.18 Pupils show strong social skills and work together well to solve problems. They are instinctively mature social beings. When visiting the local park, pupils displayed good levels of collaboration through working together to make their individual swings go higher by sharing the technique needed. The youngest children worked collaboratively when playing a pirate game of walking the plank, showing excellent teamwork skills when their construction collapsed, working together to build it back up. Pupils of all ages mix extremely well and the older members of the school community instinctively support and care for their younger compatriots. There is a strong sense of a cohesive family unit across the school. This view is also acknowledged by the parents who, in the questionnaire, feel that the school helps their children to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.19 Pupils understand the importance of their role in contributing both to school life and to the wider community. They are good citizens in every respect, whether this be by instinctively picking up litter, offering their seat to somebody else on the train or raising funds for those who may be less fortunate. They love their involvement with local places such as the library, the swimming pool and playgrounds. Story time at the local library is a favourite activity, especially when led by a member of the rich and diverse local community such as a woman of colour or a local drag queen.
- 3.20 Pupils have an excellent cultural understanding and respect everyone irrespective of their backgrounds. Pupils learn within a diverse community. They are exposed to different languages and accept each other for who they are. In a primary lesson on acceptance pupils were able to speak about what the word meant to them. They spoke of how important it was to make sure that they accept everyone around them, feeling that it does not matter where they are from, or how they look. All of the parental respondents to the questionnaire feel that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people and that it treats children fairly, regardless of their sex, faith, race or needs.
- 3.21 Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep physically and mentally healthy. This is in evidence through all activities, whether it be using scissors correctly and safely in the preschool class or when crossing the road to visit the local park for learning and play. Pupils move around their locality demonstrating a strong awareness of travelling safely on public transport and by staying close to their

teachers. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining both a healthy body and a happy mindset. Children in the pre-school spoke of the need for healthy snacks as they brought in items for the class fruit bowl. Primary pupils spoke of the importance of using child friendly search engines as a safer way of researching on the internet. All parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school encourages their children to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Graham Gorton	Reporting inspector
Mr William Hawkes	Compliance team inspector (Bursar, HMC school)
Mrs Emma Stanhope	Team inspector (Head of lower school, ISA school)