

International School of Billund
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School code: 280462
Head of School: Camilla Uhre Fog

Inspection Report for International School of Billund Academic Year 2017-2018

By Linda Jensen

Inspection report for the International School of Billund (ISB), academic year 2017-18

The inspection has been carried out by Linda Jensen, certified inspector for international schools, and a teacher with VUC-Esbjerg.

As inspector I have visited the school two times during the school year, and have each time been met with forthcoming students, leaders, teachers and other staff. In advance of my visits I have suggested possible dates to Camilla Uhre Fog, and have always been told that I am welcome. This signifies openness.

In addition to that, the school regularly sends me (unsolicited) the newsletter that is sent to parents each month. The latest letter included information about the possible strike/ lockout situation.

On 14 September 2017 and 22 February 2018 I inspected ISB and had subsequent conversations with Camilla Uhre Fog.

During the course of the academic year I have observed most subjects and grade levels, as I do not generally stay for a full module in any given class, but visit many classes in a short period of time. I also speak with teachers, staff and parents. In this way I have acquired a solid foundation for the inspection.

The school follows the international programme from International Baccalaureate (IB), which sets the framework for teaching, but allows the school to determine content and thus adapt to Danish conditions.

A cornerstone of the ISB model is to place play at the heart of learning.

The starting point for my inspection is the requirements laid out in “Law regarding free schools and private schools, etc” and notification number 702 from 30 June 2008 with a special focus on Danish.

The law has been tightened this year to place extra focus on teaching students the conditions of Danish society and developing and strengthening their understanding of democracy. This includes, among other things, teaching students the basic principles of Danish democracy and human rights including gender and racial equality.

As an inspector I am specifically required to evaluate the following four points:

1. The students’ proficiency in Danish, mathematics and English
2. That the school’s overall teaching aligns with typical public school requirements
3. That the school prepares students for freedom, democracy and human rights
4. That the teaching language is English with a focus on Danish

1. and 2. Student proficiency and the school's overall teaching

According to the school's website, the subjects offered are equivalent to that of the Danish public school, and ISB has chosen to use the above-mentioned IB system, which establishes the framework and conditions for teaching with the possibility for a localized choice of content. This corresponds to "Fælles Mål" (Danish learning standards).

The number of students in each class is approximately 22, though classes are often divided into smaller groups, which is possible because there are always two teachers. Among classes of the same grade level there is often parallel teaching, which gives additional possibilities to differentiate according to level. There are approximately 110 students with special needs/ special focus, which can be accommodated thanks to the school's prioritizing of the two-teacher policy.

The school is in its fifth year and has begun to establish certain routines, which is helpful in providing security and a good overview. But this does not mean the school is resting on its laurels and using these routines as a crutch. In fact, the school is buzzing with life.

Teaching continues under the same structure as in previous years; ie, according to a clear teaching plan. One part of the IB system is an interdisciplinary focus, but goals and methods are always visible and accessible. Within the framework, teachers choose a unit and lines of inquiry that students explore, driven by their own curiosity. In this school year I saw, for example, a task where students had to try to create their own ideal schedule, where teachers' timetables, student wishes and academic goals had to be taken into account.

All the classes and teachers I have visited have a high level of competence that—perhaps more than required—lives up to Danish standards.

All the teachers I have observed demonstrate a fine balance between being mature, consistent, friendly, and caring. They are familiar with IB's clear structure, which is also made visible in the classrooms.

I also witnessed "Show and Tell," which is a tradition at the end of each unit. Parents visit the classrooms and see the children's writing and other work, along with listening to student presentations on the given unit. The parents I spoke with were very thankful for this tradition.

Based on my visit, I can express confidence in the students' general proficiency and trust that the school's overall teaching is aligned with normal public school requirements.

3. The school's preparation of students in relation to freedom and democracy

The school's culture and atmosphere demonstrates that this is not just a goal on paper, but something that the school community takes seriously and tries to practice. The description of ISB values (which is clearly mirrored in the school's daily life) includes:

- That students learn to work independently and in collaboration with others
- That the school works with social training and conflict resolution
- That students are included in the creation of community rules of behaviour
- That students are given an ever-increasing level of responsibility throughout their schooling
- That the school is involved in the local society

As I have said, the students were in the process of planning their own schedules based on a diversity of criteria. On several of the school's display boards I saw various lists with votes and proposals of all kinds. At no time have I experienced discrimination based on gender or race.

It is therefore my impression that the school contributes to giving students the skills to participate in, and take responsibility for, a society with freedom and democracy where people are treated according to their character and not race or gender.

4. Teaching in English with a focus on Danish

The school's principle is that, in all subjects except for Danish, the language of instruction is English. In the youngest classes, students get help with English comprehension. Within 3 months, they have a basic understanding of English, and after 6 months they speak English. Those that do not have Danish as their mother tongue must also learn to speak Danish, which can be challenging at an English-speaking school. The school's goal is to give those that want it (presumably mostly ethnic Danes) a Danish school exit exam. The Danish teachers have been given the ability to find out what will be required to accomplish that. As an extra initiative, the school has initiated a collaboration with the local language school to offer extra Danish lessons for DKK 700 per month.

It will always be true that teaching Danish to bilingual students is challenging. The motivation is not always there, there are many levels, and therefore it is sometimes hard to find teaching materials that cater to everyone. The school continues working toward improving instruction. I observed Danish lessons in both P3 and M9 with non-Danish students. The teaching quality was high, so the school cannot do more. I also observed Danish lessons in M9 for students with Danish as their mother tongue. These students will be taking the Danish school exit exam, and it is my judgement that they will be able to pass it with at least the same academic level as those in public school. There were only 6 students in the group, which meant there was lots of time to devote to each individual student.

About the role of the inspector

It was important for me to present myself as an interested and questioning but loyal and critical inspector. The Ministry has emphasized that an inspection should contribute to the school's development. I would like to impress that my positive description of the school is not subjective but exclusively based on the observations I have made.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, it should be very clear that ISB is a well-functioning school, and that the school's overall teaching "aligns with, what is normally required in public schools."

11 March 2018, Linda Jensen, Kongensgade 87a, 2. sal, 6715 Esbjerg, linda-jensen@hotmail.com

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Tilsynserklæring For International School of Billund Skoleåret 2017-2018

Ved Linda Jensen

Tilsynserklæring for International School of Billund (ISB), skoleåret 2017-2018

Tilsynet er blevet udført af Linda Jensen, certificeret tilsynsførende for internationale skoler samt lærer ved VUC-Esbjerg.

Som tilsynsførende har jeg besøgt skolen 2 gange i løbet af skoleåret og er hver gang blevet mødt med stor imødekommenhed af såvel elever, leder, lærere og øvrige ansatte. Jeg har forud for besøgsdagene selv foreslået datoer til Camilla Uhre Fog, hvornår besøgene skulle finde sted og har fået at vide, at jeg altid er velkommen. Det vidner om en stor åbenhed. Desuden modtager jeg uopfordret de samme måneds- og informationsbreve, som forældre modtager. Senest med håndtering af evt. konfliktsituation.

Den 14. september 2017 og den 22. februar 2018 var jeg på tilsyn og havde efterfølgende samtale med Camilla Uhre Fog.

Jeg har i løbet af året igen overværet de fleste fag og årgange, eftersom jeg ikke nødvendigvis bliver et fuldt modul i en klasse, men besøger mange klasser i mindre tid. Jeg taler - foruden med lærerne - også med andre personalegrupper og forældre. Dermed har jeg fået et solidt fundament at føre tilsyn på.

Skolen arbejder efter det internationale undervisningsprogram, International Baccalaureate (IB), der kloden rundt sætter rammerne for undervisningen, men hvor skolen selv kan bestemme indholdet og dermed tilpasse det til danske forhold.

Én af hjørnestenene i denne model er at sætte legen i centrum for læring.

Mit udgangspunkt for mit tilsyn er kravene i "Bekendtgørelse af lov om friskoler og private grundskoler m.v." og bekendtgørelse nr. 702 af 30. juni 2008 med et særligt fokus på dansk. Loven er i år blevet skærpet, således at der ekstra fokus på at undervise eleverne i danske samfundsforhold samt til at udvikle og styrke elevernes demokratiske dannelse. Dette omfatter bl.a., at eleverne indføres i grundlæggende principper for det danske demokrati og folkestyre, herunder friheds- og menneskerettigheder som f.eks. ligestilling mellem køn og racer.

Som tilsynsførende er jeg forpligtet på særligt at forholde mig til følgende fire punkter:

1. Elevernes standpunkt i dansk, matematik og engelsk.
2. At skolens samlede undervisning står mål med, hvad der almindeligvis kræves i folkeskolen.
3. At skolen forbereder eleverne til frihed, folkestyre og menneskerettigheder.
4. At undervisnings sproget er engelsk men med fokus på dansk.

1 + 2. Elevernes standpunkt og skolens samlede undervisning.

Som det fremgår af skolens hjemmeside, svarer fagrækken til folkeskolens, og ISB har valgt at anvende det førnævnte IB-system, der opsætter de ydre rammer og betingelser for undervisningen med mulighed for lokalt valg af indhold. Dette svarer til Fælles Mål.

Elevantallet i klasserne er på ca. 22, men som regel bliver disse delt i flere enheder, hvilket kan lade sig gøre, fordi der altid er 2 lærere samt der ofte er parallelforløb, hvilket giver flere muligheder for at differentiere.

Der er ca. 110 elever med særlige behov/særligt fokus, som bl.a. kan tilgodeses i kraft af skolens prioritering af tolærerordningen.

Skolen er i sit 5. år og begyndt at få nogle rutiner, hvor det giver mening, da de kan give tryghed og overblik. Dette skal dog ikke forstås som, at skolen ligger på den lade side og blot læner sig op af rutinerne. Der summer fortsat af liv og dynamik.

Undervisningen foregår efter samme struktur som de forgangne år; dvs. tydelig undervisningsplan. En del af IB-planen er, at der arbejdes meget tværfagligt. Jf. trykte og tilgængelige undervisningsplaner fremgår mål og metode. Inden for rammerne vælger læreren et emne og en tese, som eleverne i løbet af undervisningen skal efterprøve ved at være nysgerrige og undersøgende. I dette skoleår har jeg bl.a. set en opgave, hvor eleverne selv skulle prøve at lave det idéelle skema, hvor alle læreres skemaer, elevernes ønsker samt faglige mål skulle imødeses.

Alle klasser og lærere, jeg har besøgt har et højt fagligt niveau, der – måske mere end påkrævet – lever op til de fælles faglige mål.

Alle lærere, jeg har observeret, behersker den fine balance mellem at være myndige, konsekvente, venlige og omsorgsfulde. De, eleverne og forældrene kender IB's tydelige struktur, der også er demonstreret i klasseværelserne.

Jeg oplevede også "Show and Tell", som er en tradition efter hver emneafslutning. Forældre kommer på besøg i klasserne og ser børnenes stile og andre elevprodukter samt hører børnenes præsentation af et emne. De forældre, jeg mødte, var meget glade for denne tradition.

Jeg kan på baggrund af mine besøg udtrykke tillid til elevernes generelle standpunkter og tillid til, at skolens samlede undervisning står mål med det, der almindeligvis kræves i folkeskolen.

3.Skolens forberedelse af eleverne i forhold til frihed, folkestyre og menneskerettigheder

Skolens kultur og atmosfære vidner om, at formålet ikke blot er noget, der står på papiret, men noget man tager alvorligt og prøver at efterleve. Fra værdigrundlaget (som tydeligt afspejles i skolens dagligdag) kan nævnes:

- at eleverne lærer at arbejde selvstændigt og i samarbejde med andre
- at der arbejdes med social træning og konstruktiv konfliktløsning
- at eleverne inddrages i udarbejdelse af fælles samværsregler
- at eleverne oplever en stadig større grad af medansvar op gennem skoleforløbet
- at skolen involverer sig i lokalsamfundet.

Som allerede nævnt var eleverne i gang med at planlægge et skoleskema på baggrund af div. kriterier. Rundt omkring på opslagstavler så jeg div. lister med afstemning og forslag i mange retninger. Ikke på noget tidspunkt har jeg oplevet forskelsbehandling i forhold til køn eller race.

Det er således mit indtryk, at skolen bidrager til at give eleverne forudsætninger for at indgå i og tage ansvar i et samfund med frihed og folkestyre, der behandler mennesker ud fra deres personlighed og ikke farve eller køn.

4. Undervisning på engelsk men med fokus på dansk

Skolens princip er, at der i alle andre fag end dansk, tales engelsk. I de mindste klasser kan eleverne få lidt hjælp til at forstå. I løbet af 3 måneder forstår de nogenlunde, og efter 6 måneder taler de engelsk. Dem, der har dansk som andetsprog, skal også lære dansk, hvilket godt kan give lidt udfordringer på en engelsksproget skole. Skolens mål er at give dem, der ønsker det (formentning mest etnisk danskere) en dansk afgangseksamen. Dansk lærerne har i første omgang fået lov til at finde ud af, hvad det vil kræve for at opnå dette. Som et ekstra initiativ har man i samarbejde med Sprogskolen tilbudt ekstra danskundervisning for kr. 700,- om måneden.

Det vil altid være en præmis, at danskundervisningen af de tosprogede er svær. Motivationen er der ikke altid, der er mange niveauer og dermed er det ikke nemt at finde undervisningsmateriale, der tilgodeser alle. Der arbejdes fortsat mod at optimere undervisningen. Jeg observerede både danskundervisning i P3 og M9 med ikke etnisk danske elever. Undervisningen var i top, så skolen kan ikke gøre mere. Jeg observerede også M9 dansk for elever med dansk som modersmål. Eleverne skal til dansk afgangseksamen, og jeg vurderer, at de vil kunne bestå den på minimum samme faglige niveau som i folkeskolen. I gruppen var der kun 6 elever, hvilket betød, at der var meget tid til hver enkelt elev.

Om rollen som tilsynsførende

Det var vigtigt for mig at præsentere mig som en interesseret og spørgende, men loyal og kritisk tilsynsførende. Fra Ministeriets side har man understreget, at tilsynet gerne skulle være af en sådan karakter, at det bidrager til skolens udvikling. Jeg vil gerne præcisere, at min positive beskrivelse af skolen ikke er subjektiv, men udelukkende baseret på mine observationer.

Afsluttende erklæring

Det skal afslutningsvis stå helt klart, at ISB er en velfungerende skole, og at skolens samlede undervisning "står mål med, hvad der almindeligvis kræves i folkeskolen".

11. marts 2018, Linda Jensen, Kongensgade 87a, 2. sal, 6715 Esbjerg, linda-jensen@hotmail.com

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