

INTERNATIONELLA ENGELSKA SKOLAN

Quality Report 2024/2025





Contents:

"Safety and academic results go hand in hand"	4
IES in short	6
Continuous quality improvement deeply rooted in our core principles	9
Cambridge: International qualification to provide an extra challenge	19
The right support helps all students thrive	20
IES Lund: "We are good at identifying needs quickly"	21
Focus on safety in schools	22
IES Jönköping: A focus on crime prevention	25
IES Eskilstuna: Best in class at cracking the reading code for their students	26
Initiatives to improve physical and mental health	28
IES Staffanstorp won the Swedish Youth Chess Championship	30
Competitions	31
IES Staffanstorp: Graduation – a symbolic end to an important part of young people's lives	32
A safe working environment makes for enjoyable and successful schools	34
CEO: "Our goal is to constantly improve quality in a changing world"	38

Quality report for Internationella Engelska Skolan 2024-2025

Welcome to Internationella Engelska Skolan's quality report covering the 2024-2025 academic year.

IES was founded in 1993, and today has the confidence of parents to educate 30,000 students in our 47 schools, located from Skellefteå in the north to Trelleborg in the south of Sweden. The main reason parents and students choose IES is our three core principles: Firstly, that we offer students the opportunity to become bilingual and thus have access to international education and work. Secondly, that we have high expectations and aspirations for each student, both in terms of academic performance and social skills.

Our third core principle is that we create a safe and calm school environment that fosters learning. We are convinced that safety and learning go hand in hand; students who feel safe in their school and can trust their teachers are more receptive to knowledge. In this report, we describe how we are working to create such a school environment.

The proportion of our students who qualify for upper secondary school education is at a consistently high level, year on year, and significantly higher than the Swedish average. One key reason for this is that we see to the needs of each individual, and never give up on any student. Those students who need support are supported, and those who need to be challenged are challenged. Every student must be given the chance to reach their full potential, regardless of their background. Succeeding in this objective is our primary measure of quality.

We have worked systematically with a number of quality processes over many years so that we can analyse our progress towards achieving our quality goals. These processes, which have been developed and refined throughout the three decades we've been in operation, show where we are successful and where there is room for improvement. Based on our quality metrics, we work constantly to become an even better school for our students. Schools fulfil one of the most important functions in society, and a high level of quality in schooling is essential to our children's future prospects.

Robin Kirk Johansson, head of education:

"Safety and academic results go hand in hand"

To be able to learn, children need to feel safe at school, trust their teachers and be able to confide in them if anything is wrong. We are convinced that the key to achieving such a safe school environment is strong relationships – between students and teachers, and also with parents, mentors, support staff and authorities.

IES operates according to three core principles: high academic expectations and aspirations, command of the English language and the importance of a safe, calm school environment. We are convinced that every child can achieve success, regardless of their background. For us, this is not just about academic success – it's about helping our students go out into the world with confidence as responsible individuals. It means giving every student the opportunity and tools to achieve their full potential. It also means imparting a passion for learning and a view that knowledge is important.

Our aim is to continue to deliver according to these principles – which have guided our activities since IES was founded more than 30 years ago. The past school year is testimony to the fact that our philosophy is sound; the number of students qualifying for upper secondary education is consistently high, as are their results in the national tests.

We are also successful in demographically more challenging areas. One thing we are particularly proud of is that assessments of the added value of our schools show that our teaching model makes the biggest difference to students from non-academic backgrounds.

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF TEACHERS

In all these areas, teachers are the key to success. Creating a safe school environment where learning is possible and students are happy requires teachers to act with both authority and warmth. This means seeing each individual and showing interest in their lives. We must treat our students with respect – but also demand that this respect is reciprocal. We have a significant responsibility to

educate our students in social skills; in respecting their fellow human beings, and society at large.

Students who feel safe, who trust their teachers and the school environment, are more receptive to learning. They gain a sense of belonging to their school and have the courage to ask for help when they find themselves in challenging situations, at home, at school or in their free time. Strong relationships form the foundation for a safe environment, not only between students and teachers, but also with mentors, parents, student health teams, municipalities, social services and the police. We all have an important role to play as the social climate gets tougher. Safety and learning go hand in hand – one cannot be achieved without the other. We have an obligation to act immediately on any sign of wrongdoing.

We put great effort into familiarising our new teachers with our approach and providing them with the necessary tools to succeed in their important work. Our strong culture and well-established practices are important elements of this – but the more experienced colleagues are equally important. As the school provider (huvudman) we do not want to decide what happens in the classroom, but we must provide our teachers with tools and ideas to help them evolve their teaching – it's a science, but it's also an art.

One of the things which makes IES unique in Swedish education is that we have an academic coordinator who is responsible for the academic quality of teaching. This involves driving a continuous dialogue on grading integrity, an area of major focus in IES' systematic quality work.



PROMOTING AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Several of our largest schools are located in, or directly adjacent to, marginalised areas. IES also has a higher proportion of students with a foreign background than the national average, 52 per cent compared to 27 per cent in Sweden as a whole. This is perhaps not surprising given our international profile. Our students are of many different nationalities. After Swedish, the most common mother tongues spoken in our schools are Arabic, English, Somali, Russian and Tigrinya.

Our name – Internationella Engelska Skolan – symbolises what we stand for: promoting an international perspective. One of our most important tasks is to convey why language is so important, not only for communication, but also for social and cultural understanding.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THEIR ENTIRE TIME AT SCHOOL

Students come to our schools with a range of different baggage and therefore have different abilities. Our aim is for their knowledge backpacks to contain the same contents when they leave us. Promoting reading and

writing skills is a priority area for us. Few children today have books at home – and if parents don't read, their children don't read either. That's why we need to fill our schools with more books and encourage students to take them home to read. They also need to be given time and space to read in class and to write down by hand what they have read, as you need to think when you write.

Our investment in expanding our operations to include preschool class and primary school in an increasing number of schools has enabled us to identify needs and offer support at an early stage. Students with learning difficulties may struggle in a bilingual environment if they are not helped early.

CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT – BUT THE SAME CORE PRINCIPLES

We are proud of our achievements in creating confident individuals, who are well-equipped to face adulthood and thus contribute to a safer and well-functioning society. But we are not completely satisfied; our goal is to constantly evolve and become even better at what we do. //





We prepare students for the world

IES is currently the largest operator of independent schools within the Swedish compulsory education system. In autumn 2025, we had 30,000 students in 46 compulsory schools, from Trelleborg in the south to Skellefteå in the north, as well as one upper secondary school. We operate bilingual schools that follow the Swedish national curriculum.

Three major convictions define life in our schools:

What we stand for

Command of English

English is a global language and learning to command both the Swedish and English languages at an early age becomes hugely advantageous later in life. We believe fluency is best achieved through language immersion. Up to half of the education at Internationella Engelska Skolan is delivered through the English language, by English-speaking teachers.

High academic expectations and aspirations

We are convinced that every child can achieve success irrespective of their background. This means we challenge every student to reach their full potential. We are dedicated to supporting students of every background to become responsible citizens and acquire the self-confidence and ambition to do the most with their talents.

A safe and calm school environment

We have clear structures and expectations as this helps students feel secure. This in turn is essential to a good learning environment and signals respect for the value of education. By showing respect for each other and ourselves we lay the foundations for safe and stimulating schooling, while we care for our students in our efforts to prepare them for success as adults.

30 000

students*

50%

girls**

52%

have a foreign background**

75%

of the students have at least one parent
with a post-secondary level education**

50%

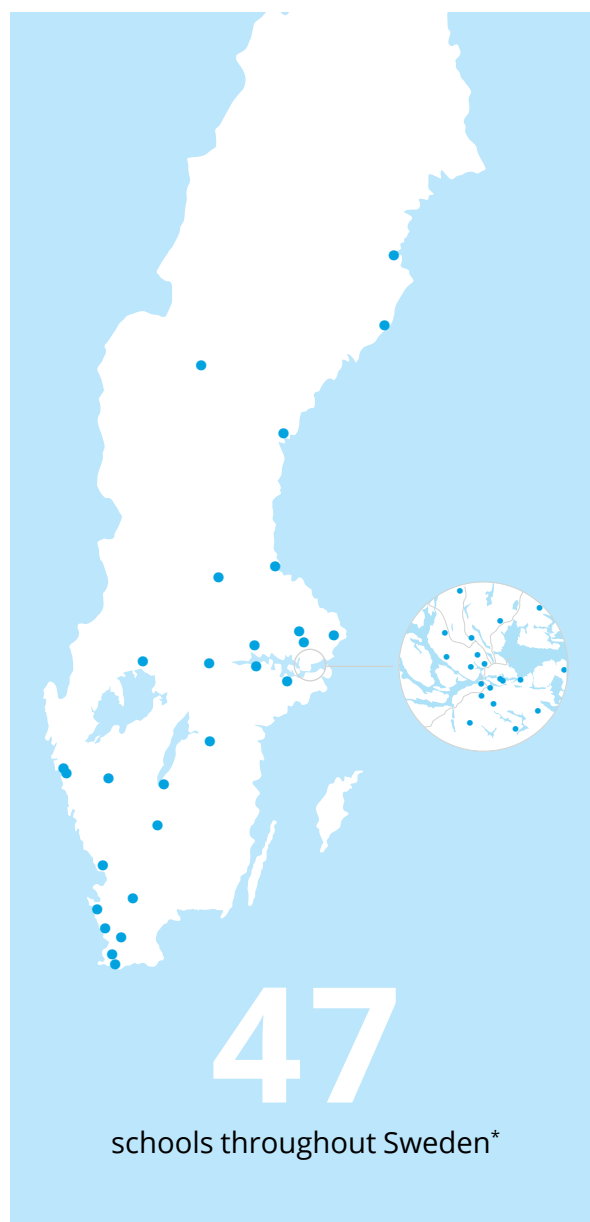
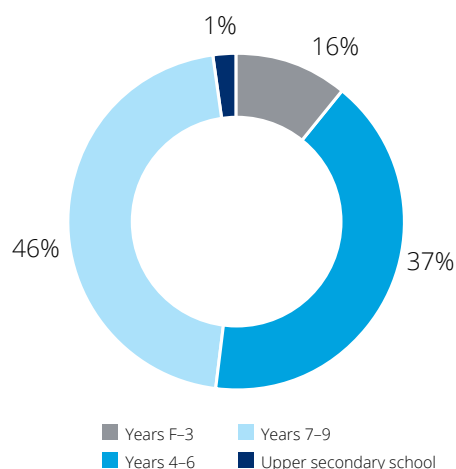
Up to half of the teaching is conducted in
English and around half of the teachers
are native English speakers.

3 800

IES has approx. 3,800 employees,
of which 2,400 are teachers**

FOCUS ON COMPULSORY SCHOOL

In Sweden, IES conducts school operations from
the first year of school (grade F) to the final year
of upper secondary school.



*Numbers as per September 2025. **Refers to the 2024/2025 academic year.





IES quality process:

Continuous quality improvement deeply rooted in our core principles

Internationella Engelska Skolan's overall goal is to give every student the possibility to achieve high academic expectations and aspirations and to navigate through an international environment, whatever their background. One of the key components of this is teaching our students such a high level of English that they become bilingual.

Our academic expectations are high for every student, in every school that IES runs. The journey has to be tailored to the composition of students and local circumstances – but we never compromise on the underlying principles that have characterised our organisation ever since we started. This is our main way of guaranteeing a high level of quality.

Internationella Engelska Skolan runs bilingual Swedish schools with an international profile, where each student is given the opportunity to achieve high academic expectations and aspirations and where teaching takes place in a safe and calm environment. The organisation was founded in 1993 with one school in central Stockholm.

Our organisation has always believed in the same basic idea, that there must be a high level of quality in our education and that teachers must have high academic expectations for their students, regardless of the student's starting point. One important factor here is creating a supportive, safe and dynamic environment that helps to generate a positive view of school and the learning experience. It's about "hard" and "soft" quality. IES follows a systematic approach to ensure quality and identify potential areas for improvement, including regular evaluation, action and follow-up. ►

IES QUALITY IMPROVEMENT WORK IS BASED ON FOUR INDICATORS:

Student survey

Parent survey

Teacher survey

National tests

These areas are based on several different indicators including surveys, qualification for upper secondary school, national tests and admissions to higher education.

STRUCTURED FOLLOW-UP

Throughout the entire organisation there is a strong desire to keep improving so as to fulfil our promise to parents and students. While it can be difficult to measure and compare the quality of different schools, one set of measurements that can be used is the national test results, as these tests are conducted by all schools in Sweden. This is why IES has focused on following up the results of these tests for many years. When measured over time, the results of IES' students are approximately 15 per cent higher than the national average in the subjects of mathematics, Swedish and English. One of the primary goals for IES is for all students to qualify for further studies. In the 2024/2025 academic year, 79.9 per cent of all IES students who graduated from year nine passed all of their subjects. This figure was 71.9 per cent for the entire country including IES, which means that IES students help to raise the national average. Furthermore, 91.1 per cent of IES students qualified for upper secondary school, compared with 84.1 per cent for Sweden as a whole.

STRONG AND CLEAR LEADERSHIP

Strong local school leadership is an important parameter for a safe and orderly school environment. This is in turn essential to effective learning – in other words to achieving quality. IES is driven by its core values and recruits principals who live and lead according to these. Our principals ensure that IES' core values are converted into actions and behaviours, every day.

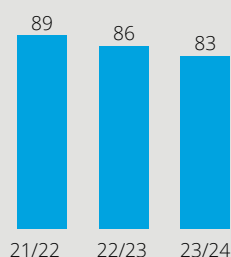
This work is based on our Basic Defining Policy, which describes IES' targets, expectations and ethical guidelines. The principal is responsible for ensuring that their school's operations adhere to the policy. Each school also draws up school rules, in accordance with the Swedish Education Act. These rules are updated every year in consultation with the student council, and signed by students and guardians. At the same time, teachers are expected to act as role models for how these should be put into practice.

STRUCTURED AND CONTINUOUS QUALITY PROCESS

Our quality improvement work follows a carefully-structured, annual process. Every school sets goals and plans its operations for the upcoming academic year. While goals are set locally, they are agreed against the overarching ►

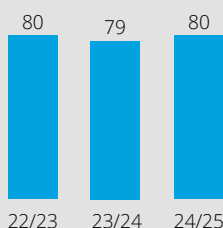
STATISTICS FROM OUR ANNUAL ANONYMOUS SURVEY OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Percentage of parents that recommend the school



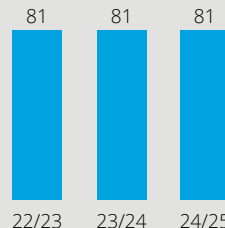
Source: IES School Survey

Percentage of students that feel safe at their school



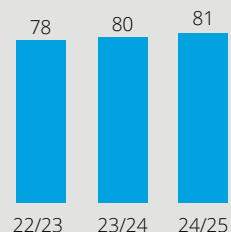
Source: IES School Survey

Percentage of students that feel challenged by the school work



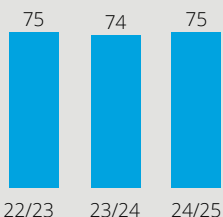
Source: IES School Survey

Percentage of employees that recommend their school



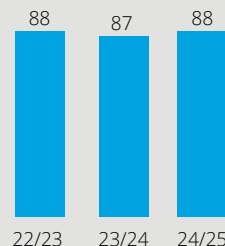
Source: IES School Survey

Percentage of students that feel that adults at the school make a stand against bullying



Source: IES School Survey

Percentage of employees that feel that their work is rewarding and stimulating



Source: IES School Survey



goals for IES as an organisation. These include results and environmental factors, i.e. the dimensions of quality defined by IES.

In April every year, students, parents and employees are surveyed to assess how well the organisation lives up to these goals. The questions are formulated per target group under the categories of academic environment, social environment (i.e. safety, support and a calm study environment) and the school environment. Parents and employees are also asked about how well the school's leadership works.

The answers are evaluated during the summer by the organisation's quality managers, i.e. IES' education team, regional directors and the principal of each school. Any deviations versus the goals are identified, and an action plan is developed jointly with the relevant school at the beginning of the academic year. Data is compiled in a report that every school works with during the entire academic year.

Recent years have testified to the significance of the social component of our operations. During the pandemic, when physical meetings with parents decreased and activities for students outside of teaching hours were suspended, students' and parents' perception of quality and their engagement with the school decreased. It was a clear indication of how important it is for us to stay in close contact with parents and to link academic work with student care, the foundation of our organisation ever since the beginning.

A tougher social climate has made many parents and children feel less safe, as shown in our surveys.

To address this, we are constantly adapting our quality work to keep pace with societal developments. A key part of this is providing all our employees with the tools to continue to support students and create a safe school environment. This work includes ongoing training, knowledge sharing and experience exchange between schools.

GREAT INTEGRITY IN GRADING

Integrity in grading is a major priority for IES' systematic quality work. Every year, the grading within each school is evaluated, compared and analysed using IES' statistics database. Any deviations in grades compared to the results in the national tests, as well as any deviations compared to the IES average and municipal and national averages, are examined to ensure that the teachers grade correctly. IES' quality improvement system can monitor several different areas, including per student, school, year and subject, and it allows comparisons over time.

Every teacher has been granted the authority to set grades and IES supports them in this by providing the right conditions for teachers to make fair assessments.

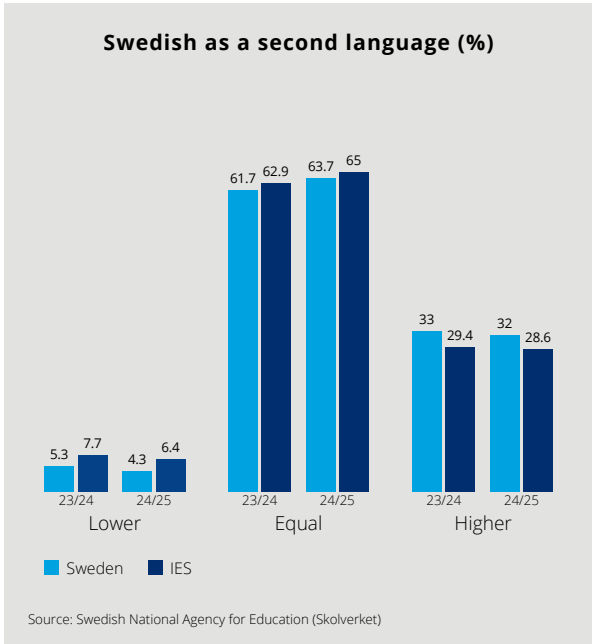
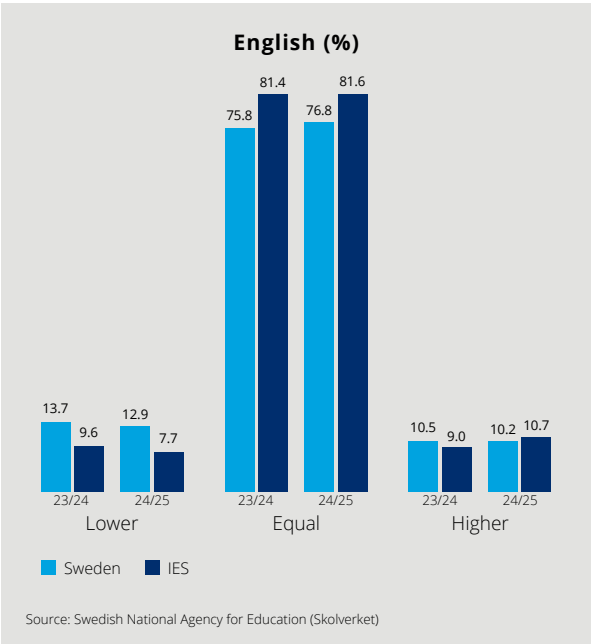
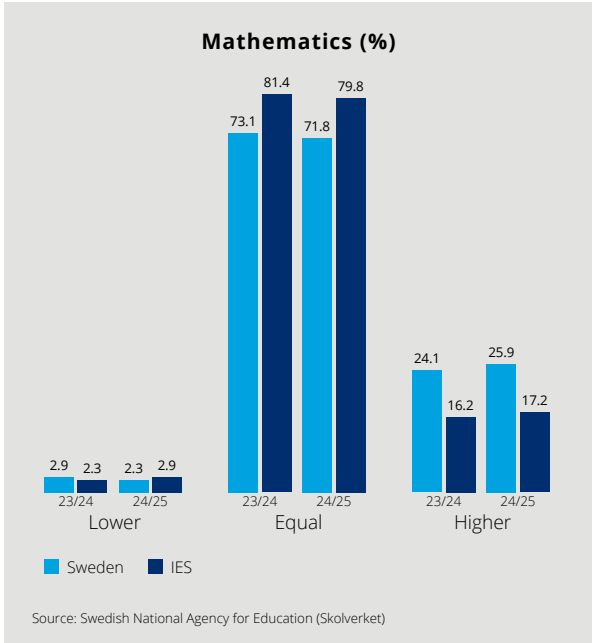
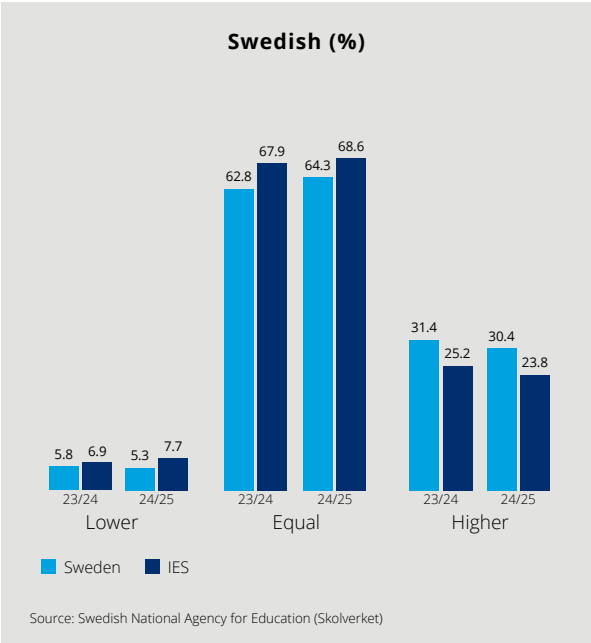
To help teachers and ensure grades are set fairly, we have set up an internal moderation process between subject teachers in our schools, in which the subject teachers compare student work before setting grades, so as to facilitate fair grading. In addition, specific heads of department are tasked with coordinating the quality of teaching and grading between the schools. Further training in this area is also held for the schools' academic managers.

House system generates community and belonging

In many IES schools, every student belongs to a house. There are often four or five houses at a school, depending on its size, and they often have imaginative names such as Dragon, Lion, Eagle or Griffin. The houses are used to create a sense of belonging across the years. The system breaks down barriers between age groups and creates a sense of belonging. It encourages older students to look after younger ones. Regular house meetings are organised throughout the academic year. Students earn points for their houses for good behaviour, special achievements, competitions and events.



IES STUDENTS' FINAL GRADES ARE MORE CONSISTENT WITH THEIR RESULTS ON THE NATIONAL TESTS THAN IN THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE



IES teachers that have a foreign teaching degree must always receive specific support for grading from a teacher with a Swedish teaching degree in that subject. The heads of departments and academic managers in each school are responsible for ensuring that new teachers from other countries quickly gain an understanding of the Swedish system of grading and the Swedish national curriculum.

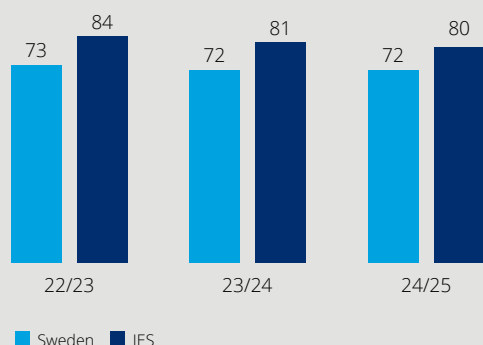
In several places around the country, IES has also started to collaborate with municipal schools to compare grading and learn from each other. Results in the national tests also serve as a guideline for grading and are specifically taken into account when teachers give grades.

NATIONAL TESTS

IES closely monitors each student’s national test results. This is an important part of our quality improvement work, and ensures that students develop the knowledge and skills they need for the future.

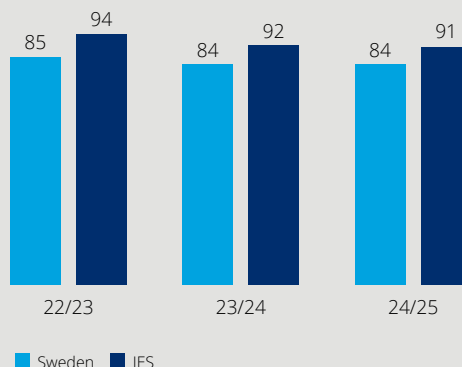
For the fourth year in a row, national statistics for the results of the year nine national tests (2024/2025) showed a higher level of consistency between IES students’ results in these tests and their final grades in Swedish, Swedish as second language, mathematics and English when compared with the entire country. We see this as proof that the continuous efforts made by our teachers, principals and ▶

Percentage of students that achieved knowledge targets in all subjects



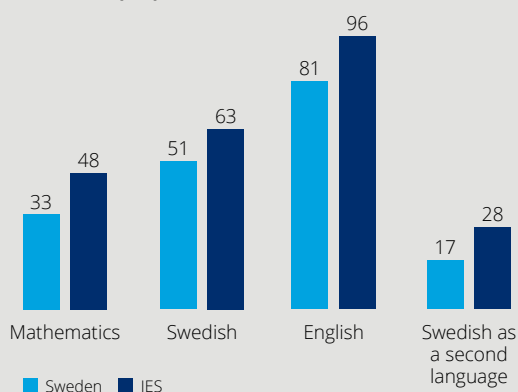
Source: Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket)

Percentage of students qualified for upper secondary school



Source: Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket)

Percentage of students with top grades (C+) in the national tests



Source: Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket)
Refers to the 2024/2025 national tests.

academic managers to ensure accurate and fair grading are having an impact.

The national tests are an important instrument for assessing students' knowledge and for ensuring accurate and fair grading. For that reason, IES has advocated for central grading of the national tests for many years, and we are now delighted that the Government intends to accelerate this transition. Until it is introduced, we will continue to implement systematic cooperation between our IES schools on moderation of the national tests.

In subjects for which there is no national test, such as technology, crafts, art, music and home economics, each school submits its preliminary grades to "Huvudman" one month prior to grading. The purpose of this is to see the distribution of the grades and identify any deviations. If deviations are noticed, the relevant school is asked to analyse the situation further.

VALUE ADDED

An objective measure of school quality is needed to address low levels of knowledge and to identify which kinds of

teaching work well. We believe that the value-added metric is good place to start. The value-added metric aims to measure the degree of change in students' performance that can be attributed to the school. The score is calculated by comparing the results of the national tests in year six and year nine in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and Swedish.

To ensure that the value-added score captures the quality of the school, the calculations also take background variables into account, including the country of birth of the students and their parents, and the parents' level of income and education. Value added scores are based on student-level data from Statistics Sweden (SCB) for all students registered to take the national tests.

If the difference is positive and is larger than in other schools, it indicates that the school has contributed positively to the student's progress during their schooling. In countries such as Norway, England and the US the value added is measured systematically as part of the school system. Independent researchers Gabriel Heller-Sahlgren and Henrik Jordal regularly carry out analyses of value added, based on the results of the national tests. The measurements suggest that IES' value-added scores continue to be positive in English and mathematics, and remain within the same margin of error for Swedish when compared with other school operators.

The value-added metric obviously needs to be supplemented with other measurements of the school's operations, such as enjoyment and the school's role in upbringing, elements that develop the students' social skills, confidence and faith in the future, which are also important aspects of the task of schooling. Just as it does today, our future systematic quality work needs to encompass regular surveys of students, parents and school staff.

ENHANCING QUALITY THROUGH SCHOOL VISITS

In addition to the above, the school operator carries out regular quality visits to all our schools. A school's entire



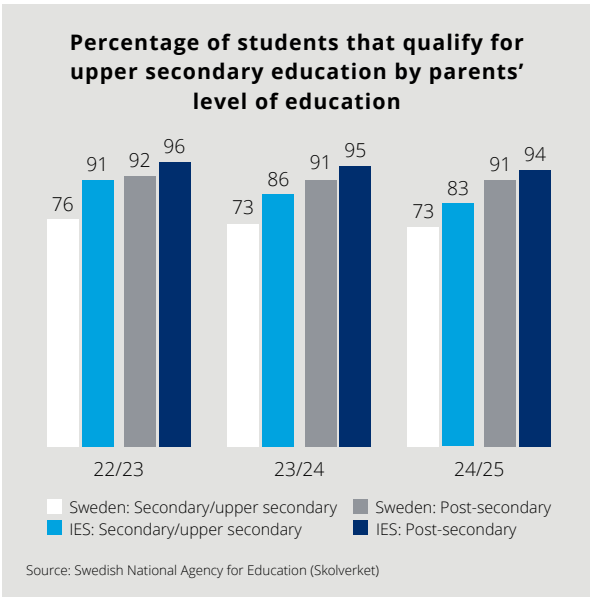
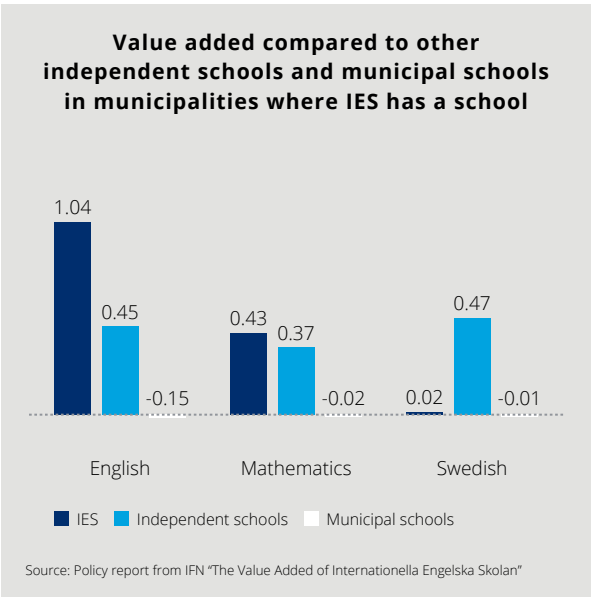
operations are reviewed during these visits, and the organisation's head of education, head of academics and head of pastoral interview the school's teachers, principal and academic managers. They also attend lessons, after which they share their observations with the principal. These observations are followed up continuously as part of our systematic quality work, and as a way to identify best practice and areas for improvement.

COMPLAINTS

IES is keen to develop close and trustworthy collaboration with guardians, for the good of the children and their education. If students or their guardians have a complaint,

they are encouraged to contact the student's mentor who will document the complaint and start an investigation if needed. The mentor may also forward the complaint to the head of year, head of department, academic manager or another member of staff. If the complaint concerns an employee, it is sent immediately to the principal or assistant principal.

If no acceptable solution can be reached within the school, the complaint can be forwarded to the organisation that operates the school, Internationella Engelska Skolan i Sverige AB. Guardians can also contact the school operator directly via a form on the IES website. ►



FULFILLING STUDENTS' DIFFERENT NEEDS

IES helps all students reach their full potential, which is a crucial factor for them to achieve good results. In practice it means the school must help students who need support, while also ensuring that high-performing students are sufficiently stimulated and challenged, and we never give up on any student. As a role model, the school has to show as much 'grit' – determination and a burning desire to see things through – as is expected of the students.

Students perform diagnostic tests in Swedish and mathematics in years four and six to identify those who need extra support or those who need more of a challenge. Since IES started in 1993 it has offered homework support on top of regular lessons so that students can study a subject in more detail, receive more challenging work or get help. Those schools that have a large proportion of students with a weaker socio-economic background often stay open longer in the afternoons to offer students a calm place to do their homework. They also serve breakfast to ensure that the students get a good start to the day.

By motivating every single student to do their best and by having high expectations of all students, IES helps students from all types of backgrounds to achieve better results. As an example, 83 per cent of IES students whose parents have no post-secondary education qualified to study at upper secondary school (see graphs on page 15). This compares with the national average of 73 per cent (figures refer to the 2024/2025 academic year).

INCREASED FOCUS ON STUDENT HEALTH

Statistics show that a growing number of children and young people suffer from poor health. To help change that trend, IES has intensified its efforts in the area of health with actions aimed at promoting students' learning, development and health and preventing poor health. This is the responsibility of the student health team consisting of school nurses, school doctors, school psychologists, counsellors and career guidance counsellors whose work is integrated with the school's academic teams. The team has both a preventative and a responsive role which includes medical, psychological, psychosocial and special education activities. They collaborate with other school staff and also with external parties such as social services. All their work is subject to professional confidentiality.

One of the focus areas is in student obesity and overweight students. The number of children and young people who are overweight or obese has increased drastically over recent decades, which has increased their risk of developing associated chronic illnesses and mental health issues. If measures are taken early on the trajectory can be changed which makes the role of school nurses a very important one. It is, however, a sensitive and difficult subject to broach. To make this easier, IES has created support materials and a model for health-related conversations held with students.

Introducing students to physical activities is an important element in promoting their health and well-being.

"I was attracted by the structured way of working"

"After working as a subject teacher in Södertälje for four years, I moved to Brittany in France, where I got a job in a school. In my experience in France in general, and specifically at the school where I worked, the approach is much more structured and disciplined than in most Swedish schools.

"When I decided to move back to Sweden last year, I realised that IES would be a good fit for me. I was attracted by the structured way of working, which I know from personal experience works, and by the sense of being part of an international environment, with teachers and students from many countries around the world. I really enjoy it."

EDDIE SKARP, YEAR 6B MENTOR, AND TEACHER OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN YEARS SIX TO NINE, IES STAFFANSTORP





As part of this, IES has initiated the “#movewithIES” health initiative aimed at enabling our schools to provide meaningful and stimulating activities during breaks and leisure time. The ultimate goal is to create and establish healthy habits that our students will keep for the rest of their lives. The initiative has been running since 2021. More and more schools are joining the initiative, and it was taken on by the IES central student health team in the 2024/2025 academic year so that all schools can be included.

School food is another aspect of student health. Good food leads to a calmer school atmosphere and better conditions for learning. For that reason, IES’ focus on quality also encompasses the meals served in our schools. A school meal policy was introduced during the year. Its purpose is to ensure that IES’ school meals provide the nutritional content required by the Swedish Food Agency’s (Livsmedelsverket) national guidelines for school meals. The policy also ensures a high level of quality and variety in school meals, and that the food is tasty, sustainable and safe.

PRIORITISING SAFETY

Providing safety is also important to achieving good academic results. All schools adhere to the Plan Against Abusive Treatment. This describes how the school actively and purposefully works to prevent all forms of abusive treatment. Physical safety around the school is another

priority, including the traffic situation and any potential threats from external visitors. IES applies a “closed-campus” policy which means all students remain within the school during school hours and all visitors must register at a manned reception.

IES’ activities to improve student health, safety and the physical working environment are governed by the document Checklist for Health and Safety, and each school’s principal is responsible for implementing and following up this work. The results of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate’s (Skolinspektionen) evaluations also provide input to our systematic quality efforts. The school’s academic managers help teachers to identify students who need extra resources or otherwise need to be given more attention, while the student health coordinator ensures that other educational resources are made available.

IES complies with the Swedish Education Act, including chapter six, and respects the obligation each school has to notify, investigate and act on abusive treatment. In addition, the principals of each school develop a more detailed plan for how bullying must be prevented and dealt with. These procedures are documented in each school’s Plan Against Abusive Treatment, and are then followed up via the annual survey in which students are asked whether they feel safe in the school. //



50%

of IES students received top grades (A or A*) in IGCSE English as a second language

Cambridge International Education

International qualification to provide an extra challenge

There is a growing interest among students at our schools across the country in studying and taking exams to the high standards of the Cambridge IGCSE programme. This offers a unique opportunity for our students to challenge themselves further, as a Cambridge qualification is more demanding than the Swedish curriculum.

Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular qualification for 14 to 16-year-olds, and Internationella Engelska Skolan is an accredited Cambridge Associate. This means IES students can choose to study for and take the Cambridge IGCSE exams (International General Certificate of Secondary Education).

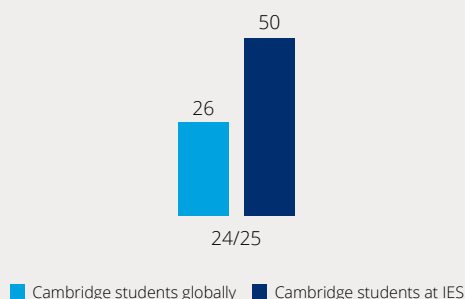
"I am delighted to see growing interest in international qualifications across our schools. It is encouraging that our students are choosing the academic rigour of the Cambridge IGCSE, which not only requires deeper subject

knowledge but also strengthens essential skills such as critical thinking and English language proficiency. By expanding this offering to more IES schools, we are ensuring that more students can achieve this globally recognised qualification, opening doors for their future both academically and professionally," says Frederik Granström, Cambridge manager at IES.

Cambridge International Education is part of the University of Cambridge and works with more than 10,000 schools in 160 countries, which offer its programmes and exams. Currently, IES is the largest Cambridge provider in Sweden. IES students are also amongst those who achieve the best results internationally when it comes to taking the Cambridge IGCSE exam in English as a second language.

The Cambridge IGCSE is trusted and recognised around the world and can create opportunities for studies and a career abroad. Some students are looking for an extra challenge, others want to open as many doors as possible to studying and working internationally, and a third group wants to improve their English language skills.

Percentage of students with top grades (A or A*) in IGCSE English as a second language



Source: Cambridge International Education



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge Associate

Special needs education

The right support helps all students thrive

IES' vision is grounded in respect for students and that school life should equip every individual with the best possible tools for adulthood – in the form of knowledge and social skills. "To succeed in this, we need to recognise students who require special support at an early stage," says Andreas Blommé, special education manager at IES.

There are many reasons why students have difficulties in learning. Some struggle with academic challenges such as dyslexia and dyscalculia, i.e. difficulty understanding and using letters or numbers. For others, it may be social challenges, for example linked to autism, psycho-social difficulties, or medical diagnoses such as diabetes and narcolepsy.

AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF OUR WORK WITH QUALITY

Special needs education is an important part of IES' systematic quality work to ensure that these children also receive the support they require to achieve their learning goals. Andreas Blommé is tasked with supporting school leaders, special needs teachers and student health teams. His mission is to equip each IES school with the knowledge, resources and tools needed to meet changing needs. The foundational efforts in this area aim to fulfil the goal that all students can read, write and count by the time they leave school.

"Teachers and other school staff have a duty to make extra adjustments to teaching if they identify that a student needs support in any area. If these adjustments are not sufficient, staff have to report this to the principal. This is followed by an educational assessment and an Individualised Education Programme.

"This can involve many different types of intervention – sometimes something simple as part of the action programme, such as an oral test. Special support measures may also be implemented, such as a student with autism

being met at the entrance by a member of the school staff, who tells them exactly what the day ahead holds," says Mr Blommé.

These measures may seem relatively simple – but for the individual student, they can be crucial to their well-being and progress at school.



SYSTEMATIC STRUCTURE

Mr Blommé believes it is important to create a systematic and uniform structure to guide all IES schools in working with special needs education. He also believes that all the knowledge the organisation has in this area should be available to all school leaders and teachers. The needs are significant – in winter 2024-2025, 13.9 per cent of all IES students were included in some form of action programme.

"Schools also have to deal with more unusual and challenging student cases, perhaps involving legal issues, where the school needs support. One of the main challenges can be involving parents and guardians and having a dialogue about their child's need for support to succeed at school, which can be a tough realisation for a parent. We provide teachers with ongoing training and support materials on how to deal with special needs education issues."

"When I visit our schools, I am impressed by the commitment of our teachers, special needs educators and student health teams to meet the needs of all students. But we continuously work to improve even further," says Mr Blommé. //



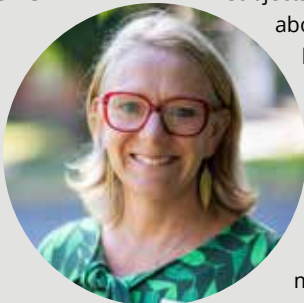
"We are good at identifying needs quickly"

Somewhere between 95 and 100 per cent of students qualify for upper secondary school year after year. Students with one of the highest average qualification levels in the municipality. IES Lund is a school that continuously reaps academic success – which is visible in the trophy cabinet in the school's entrance. It is also one of the IES schools with the longest history of systematic support for students with special needs.

IES Lund, which opened in 2013, currently has a special needs education team consisting of ten employees for the school's 699 students in year four to year nine.

"We put a lot of resources into systematically identifying the needs of younger students and we have become good at identifying challenges quickly. For example, we have noticed that dyslexia often spills over into mathematics, and we have therefore ensured that all classes have access to a special needs teacher in the subject," says Per Ola Olsson, principal at IES Lund.

The special needs education team is led by Jennifer Jansson, who has worked both at IES Lund and in the field many years.



"We realised early on that we had a lot of students with special support needs, who came to us when they had had problems in other schools. For example, we get students in year four who lack the most basic knowledge of the core subjects. This is one reason we have learnt so much about how to meet the needs of these students, become skilled at developing a systematic way of working and assistive tools, and have become so swift to act," she says.

According to Ms Jansson, an important aspect of special needs education is that students should not feel left out of the mainstream class. Special needs education teachers therefore always start in the classroom and then sit with small groups of students and work on perhaps reading comprehension or mathematics.

"The greatest reward for us is when a student with significant challenges manages to qualify for upper-secondary school and leaves us with self-confidence and faith in the future," she says.

IES LUND

699
students

65%
students recommend
the school

49%
students with origins
outside Sweden

95%
students qualified for
upper secondary school

91%
students achieved the know-
ledge targets in all subjects

Numbers as per September 2025.

Security and safety

Focus on safety in schools

When the world around us feels unsafe, it becomes even more important that IES schools are, and are perceived to be, safe. "It's about reviewing the safety of each individual school and training staff, as well as communicating our safety initiatives to students and their guardians. Everyone should feel that school is a safe place," says Johannes Martin, security and safety director at IES.

One of the IES promises to students and parents is that we will provide a safe and secure place for learning. Which is why Internationella Engelska Skolan focuses equally on "pastoral" and "academics". Pastoral encompasses student care and safety. Creating a safe environment, where adults are always present and every individual feels secure, is fundamental. Mr Martin believes it is necessary to be transparent about the increased threat of violence in society as well as how it can affect students, along with realising that schools need to adapt to a somewhat new reality.

"The main message is that we should be preventing fires – not putting them out; that is, we should be aware of what can happen and actively work to prevent it," he says.

REVIEWING SAFETY

Mr Martin sets out that there are already many excellent safety practices and measures in place in IES schools.

"My responsibility is to ensure and constantly develop frameworks so that all our schools are safe. This is done by taking stock of each school's security and supplementing it

in the areas needed, and by training staff so that they know how to act in the event of danger and can prevent dangerous situations from arising," says Mr Martin.



"This can include anything from fire safety systems to speeding up risk analyses in response to warning signs that a student is not feeling well, and ensuring that procedures for containment and evacuation are in place. We ensure that the school's public address system works in case of an alarm, that windows are frosted and curtained, and that entrances are secure and equipped with panic locks," he continues.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT SAFETY IS IMPORTANT

Creating a safe school requires us to have clear structures and procedures. Nobody should feel unsure about the way things are done. This in turn requires good communication, as well as trust and strong relationships between students, teachers and parents. During the 2024/25 academic year, Mr Martin and a security specialist partner visited all IES schools to train and inform staff on how to act in situations of ongoing deadly violence, how to identify unusual or concerning behaviours, and how to prevent incidents on school premises.



App for critical communication

All staff at IES schools have a security app on their mobile phones to communicate quickly with each other. The app, Cosafe, is a platform for critical communication and incident management in the public sector, schools and companies. The aim is to effectively prevent, raise the alarm during, and manage incidents.



"With so many people involved in our schools – students, parents, often two sets per student, and staff – there is a risk that some individuals will be affected by the increased violence in society," he says.

"Responses to our education campaign have been very positive. For school staff, it is reassuring to know how to act and to be able to answer students' and guardians' questions about safety at school."

IES SCHOOLS HAVE CLOSED CAMPUSES

The issue of school safety came to the fore after the tragic school shooting in Örebro in February 2025. In July of the same year, new legislation to strengthen school safety came into force. This includes ensuring that all preschools and schools have a contingency plan and ongoing preparedness activities to deal with serious situations of violence and threats of violence. It should also be clear that the school is not a public place and that unauthorised persons should not be allowed to enter the school premises during

hours of operation. This is the responsibility of the school operator and may include clarifying boundaries, no trespassing notices, locked doors, access cards, code locks and tags.

"IES has always worked to create a safe and secure school environment, for example, our schools are already closed to the public and have a manned reception where visitors have to register," says Mr Martin.

"We also place great emphasis on the visibility of all staff, which means that everyone learns to recognise who belongs to the school – and can spot if someone else is trespassing."

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE

Research suggests that there is no single explanation for why some children and young people develop non-normative behaviour or start committing crimes. It may involve students who act alone or gang crime. ►



"This can be anything from a student misbehaving, stealing, fighting, skipping school and maybe starting a fire in a school, to a shooting outside the building and serious threats to, or from, individual students," says Mr Martin.

"But we know that children and young people who do break norms, rules or laws need to be identified and given support to understand the consequences of their actions as early as possible to break the trend before the problems become serious. In many cases, collaboration between schools and other stakeholders, such as parents, the police, the healthcare system and social services, is crucial to achieving results. Children and young people with multiple risk factors often

need intensive and comprehensive interventions. That's why it's important that collaboration works," says Mr Martin.

Statistics from the Swedish Work Environment Authority (Arbetsmiljöverket) point to an increasingly harsh and aggressive climate in society, with a growing number of reports concerning threats and violence. Therefore, investment in security and staff training will remain an important and prioritised area for IES.

"Involving everyone in the school is essential. The more people who can signal that violence is not accepted, the easier it will be to stop and prevent offences and violence," he says. //



"Crime today is not confined to a specific area; it exists in the mobile phone."

STEFAN BERG,
COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER, SOLNA

Warning signs to watch out for, according to the police. If the child:

- Lies or appears to be hiding things
- Starts to socialise with new, older youngsters or adults
- Has new clothes or a new phone
- Stops asking for money or seems to have more money of their own
- Sends or receives many payments or large amounts of money (via swish or bank account)
- Starts to use two mobile phones
- Follows or communicates with criminals on social media
- Downloads encrypted chat apps
- Expresses themselves differently, has new opinions or values

85%

students qualified for upper secondary school

A focus on crime prevention at IES Jönköping

“We are completely reliant on the good cooperation we have in place between our staff, parents, field workers and the police to prevent students from being sucked into criminality.” So says Angelo Stevens, assistant principal of IES Jönköping, which is located between three of the town’s vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Crime prevention has long been a focus at IES Jönköping, where 857 students, 45 languages and many cultures come together under one roof. The school works with social service authorities and the police to identify children who are at risk of committing crime. Police have reported cases of children under the age of ten being drawn into criminal networks in the municipality of Jönköping – the youngest child known to the police is an 8-year-old.



Teachers play an important role in identifying and addressing risk behaviours at the school, but so do all the other staff, such as special education teachers, counsellors and student health services.

“One element of prevention is about creating healthy norms and good habits. This includes informing students and parents about the importance of promoting physical activity, getting enough sleep, eating healthily and limiting screen time – but of course also emphasising respect for other people and cultures, laws and society,” says Mr Stevens.

“We deal with a lot of cultural aspects here at the school. This is mainly a strength. Students and teachers get to know each other and gain knowledge and understanding of different cultures and backgrounds. This creates trust and safe groups,” adds Cathrine Nilsson, also an assistant principal.

CREATING GOOD ROLE MODELS

The school believes that providing students with good adult role models and liaising with parents is crucial to success in preventing crime. Jönköping municipality’s mobile collaboration group, RSG, plays a key role in this. The group is tasked with increasing outreach social work with young individuals who are at increased risk of committing crime and substance abuse. Their work is needs-driven in vulnerable neighbourhoods where there aren’t many clubs to join or meaningful activities for young people.

One of these field workers is Sonny Karlsson, a well-known football profile in the municipality and a youth consultant in Öxnehaga, an area with major socio-economic issues. He is also a familiar face in the corridors of IES Jönköping.

“It is important to build a relationship with both parents and students, and to monitor students throughout the day in and outside of school. Due to my own background, with family roots in Bosnia and growing up in a tough environment in Biskopsgården in Gothenburg, many parents feel they can open up and discuss concerns about their children with me without feeling ashamed.

“I have also got many young people interested in football, which, like other sports, can be a lifeline – as it was for me. When we succeed in breaking a dangerous cycle for a young person, it is a huge reward for me and everyone else working with us,” says Sonny Karlsson.

IES JÖNKÖPING

857
students

69%
students recommend
the school

68%
students with origins
outside Sweden

85%
students qualified for
upper secondary school

70%
students achieved the know-
ledge targets in all subjects

Numbers as per September 2025.



Best in class at cracking the reading code for their students

Engaged teachers, a deep understanding of changing needs and the right support already from preschool class (year F). These are some of the reasons for IES Eskilstuna's success in helping its students crack the reading code.

Learning to read and understanding what they read is a prerequisite for students' further learning. At the same time, several research reports – including the international PIRLS study, which examines the reading skills and attitudes to reading of students in year 4 – show that students with Swedish as a second language are disadvantaged in the Swedish school system. At IES Eskilstuna, 84 per cent of the 1,109 students have a foreign background. Through a systematic approach from preschool class and throughout the entire compulsory school years, the school is going against the grain in Sweden and has achieved great success in helping its students learn to read, understand and interpret the written word. As testimony to this, 95 per cent of year nine students who graduated in spring 2025 were eligible for upper secondary school.

"For many students who come to our school, Swedish is their third language. They may not hear Swedish at all in their spare time. Some have illiterate parents and nowadays many homes don't have any books. These are just some of the challenges," says Annika Zentio, assistant principal for school years F-3 and a driving force behind the school's increase in reading and writing proficiency.



The ability to read is crucial for a student's future success in school. Students with poor language understanding find it increasingly difficult to keep up in class – and may give up altogether when the bar is raised.

"This is particularly noticeable when students move from year three to four. For the past two years, the school has had students from as early as preschool class, which has given us a better chance to identify needs and deploy resources at an early stage," says Ms Zentio.

"We use digital tools such as LegiLexi to monitor each individual student from preschool class up to the end of middle school to check reading skills and suggest interventions based on the individual's test results. We continuously test both reading comprehension and reading speed," she continues.

DIGITAL TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS AND LEARNING

IES Eskilstuna, like all IES schools, uses the Bornholm model to stimulate language comprehension. Picture cards, letter cards and word cards are used to bring the games to life and make them tangible. Through a structured programme of language games over a long period of time, students are prepared for reading and have a better start in reading.

"All children benefit from this – but studies show that students with weak language skills benefit the most," says Annakarin Sandman Johansson, head of academics at IES.

“It’s not only about being able to decode the words, but also understanding what they read and being able to interpret things that aren’t directly expressed in the text, reading between the lines. This is essential for students to succeed in their studies in all subjects. Our students’ language development and reading comprehension are thus a matter for all teachers in all subjects,” she continues.

Through the Lexplore reading development tool, many IES schools are now using AI and eye tracking to objectively measure reading skills. The aim is to get an early picture of all students’ reading skills in an equitable way in order to allocate resources effectively and target the right interventions. Shared methodologies provide the organisation and individual schools with the opportunity for deeper collaboration and wider peer learning between all IES schools across the country.

CREATING A LOVE OF READING

IES has traditionally offered years four to nine in our schools. For a number of years now, all new schools have been open to students as early as preschool class, and more schools are reorganising to receive students for all compulsory school years, from preschool class to year nine. Today, this is half of all IES schools.

“This gives us a chance to create a good foundation, not least linguistically, for the students’ future schooling – and also a desire for lifelong learning”, says Magdalena Bull, primary years manager at IES.

“By getting to know the children and their parents early on, we are able to design reading support for each individual more effectively,” she continues.

Good digital tools can be helpful in providing children with the right conditions for learning to read – but reading traditional books is the most important thing. Reading books can improve children’s imagination and ability to form ideas, spoken language and vocabulary, storytelling and the ability to express thoughts, interest in pictures and text, and their ability to understand their environment. At IES, school libraries have always been a core part of the school, but 2022 saw the launch of a new initiative to increase student reading, focusing on empowering teachers and librarians to work together. By providing a stimulating reading environment and a wide variety of texts, school libraries can support the school’s reading education.

“We read a lot with our students and encourage them to borrow books from the library. We also have a reading project where the older students read to the younger ones – and vice versa – aimed at removing prestige and making it a fun experience,” says Ms Zentio.

“One important goal of our efforts to make all students comfortable with reading and writing is to help them create dreams for the future and make them feel equal to others. With patience and dedication, we hope to give students a different future than the one they thought they were destined for,” she continues.

IES ESKILSTUNA

1109

students

66%

students recommend
the school

84%

students with origins
outside Sweden

95%

students qualified for
upper secondary school

72%

students achieved the know-
ledge targets in all subjects

Numbers as per September 2025.





#movewithIES

Initiatives to improve physical and mental health

Studies show that students' health affects their performance at school. IES therefore works extensively with various health promotion programmes linked to mental, social and physical well-being. One of these initiatives is #movewithIES, which focuses on getting students moving during breaks.

Exercise improves concentration and memory. It increases energy levels and provides an outlet for excess energy – leading to fewer conflicts in the playground and a calmer classroom environment. These outcomes are fully in line with the ethos of IES, i.e. high academic aspirations and a safe and calm learning environment. Group exercise also has a positive effect on students socially, as it can increase group cohesion while helping individuals to make new friends.

These insights formed the basis for #movewithIES, a national health initiative within IES that started in five schools in the 2021/22 academic year. One of IES' key sustainability goals is to work proactively to improve the well-being of our students. Schools have an important role to play in this as many students do not participate in

extracurricular activities and do not have the chance to adopt healthy sleeping and eating habits at home.

Today, #movewithIES has been implemented at more than half of IES' schools and from next academic year all schools will be included in the initiative.



TOOLS FOR OUR SCHOOLS

"In the wake of the pandemic, there were alarming reports of how the health and well-being of children and young people had deteriorated. This gave rise to the idea of offering physical activities during breaks, in addition to the school subject of physical education and health," says Andjela Dimitrijevic, a former teacher at IES Eskilstuna who now leads the initiative.

"The aim of #movewithIES is to give our schools tools to work with both the physical and mental health of students

together with student health services and other school staff,” she continues.

Ms Dimitrijevic now reports to IES head office and has overall responsibility for the planning and implementation of the initiative nationally. She is also a member of the central student health team, and the initiative is part of the IES student health plan. Each #movewithIES school has a health leader, who is responsible for running the initiative locally on behalf of the school's principal.

On this particular day, Ms Dimitrijevic has visited IES Sundbyberg to discuss how the initiative can be linked to special-needs education at the school.

“We want everyone to have the chance to move about more, and for students with special needs it is important that this is done in an undemanding and inclusive way,” comments Ms Dimitrijevic.

GREATER COHESION

The initiative covers a wide range of activities at IES Sundbyberg – from basketball, football and tag in the playground to ping-pong tables inside and outdoors, shuffleboard and salsa in the common rooms. Students can also choose from cheerleading, floorball and cricket.

“We have a timetable for break-time activities which the student council can give their input to,” says principal Johanna Bohlin.

“We prioritise activities that include as many people as possible. We are working intensively to increase our students’ sense of belonging together as well as to the school, and between children and the adults who lead the activities.

Exercise can also involve improving the swimming skills of students, an area that has come under particular scrutiny following the drowning accidents during the hot summer of 2025.

“We have students from many different cultures in our school and some parents can be a little resistant to their children changing into swimwear as a group. We offer these students individual swimming lessons as a way to overcome this,” says principal Johanna Bohlin.

EDUCATING ABOUT HEALTH

#movewithIES also endeavours to educate students about health. In collaboration with the author Maria Dufva, IES has created educational films and lesson plans linked to different chapters of her book “The Very Best Health”. In addition, IES uses a web-based tool called On The Inside (known in Swedish as *Det Syns Inte*) to educate students on the topic of mental health.

The ultimate goal of #movewithIES is to create and establish healthy habits that the students maintain throughout their lives, and give them the best possible chances for physical and mental well-being in the future. //





IES Staffanstorp won the Swedish Youth Chess Championship

Challenging your brain – and having fun at the same time. These are two of the many benefits of playing chess, which have led an enthusiastic group of primary school students at IES Staffanstorp to devote much of their free time to the strategic board game.

The many hours spent at the board have turned them into skilful players; in spring 2025, they took home the prestigious first prize in the Swedish Youth Chess Championship beating another 55 competing schools from all over the country.

“I’ve been playing for two years – and I play every day. It’s much more fun than jigsaw puzzles,” says Philip Norlin, a member of the winning team.

This afternoon, just as usual, he has gathered with his team mates for a game of chess.

“There are five of us in the team and it’s often the five of us

that get together to play. This means that one of us can go round and help the four players find the best move. We have a lot of fun – and laugh a lot,” says his teammate, and classmate, Ayan Yousaf.

The benefits of chess, a combination of developing logical thinking and promoting social skills, have led IES Staffanstorp to start a chess club, just like many other IES schools. Teachers report that chess increases students’ focus and reasoning skills. Quite simply, chess is great brain exercise – as well as being a fun and sociable activity.

IES students have become so passionate about chess that the Swedish Chess Federation’s Swedish Championship tournament, which is played once a year, is not enough for them. IES has therefore organised its own chess competition, to which all school chess clubs are invited. The tournament takes place online in cooperation with the Swedish Chess Federation.

IES schools excelled in national language finals

In the past academic year, five IES schools made it all the way to the national finals of Sweden's largest language competition, the International Language Competition (ILC) – and two of our teams came first – in English and Swedish. IES Sundsvall won the English final, while IES Lund came first in Swedish, which we believe is a testament to the strength of our bilingual education.

The winning team from IES Lund competed against teams from five other schools and won with a score of 21 out of 25 points. They answered questions about literature, vocabulary, grammar and idiomatic expressions. IES Lund made it to the final with three separate teams – a record for the school. Four other IES schools also secured places in the national competition: IES Sundsvall (two teams, one of which won in the English category), IES Karlstad (two teams), IES Linköping and IES Nacka.



Students from IES Kista won a prize in the Compulsory School Challenge

In 2024/25, the mathematics team at IES Kista introduced the "Ung Företagsamhet – Compulsory School Challenge" project for students in several year groups. The initiative has sparked great interest in real-world problem solving and combines mathematics with entrepreneurship. The aim of the project, which is based on collaboration between schools and partners such as Vattenfall and Ung Företagsamhet Stockholm, is to drive innovation, encourage sustainability and inspire tomorrow's leaders.

Hetal Bhinday, head of mathematics at IES Kista, and her team work to give students the opportunity to use mathematics in practical and real-life projects like the Compulsory School Challenge. More than 1,200 students from all over the Stockholm area took part in the past academic year. Class 5B at IES Kista won the "Best Class – Rising Star of the Year" award at the regional final at Vattenfall's headquarters in Solna.

IES Solna best in Sweden in global competition

Students from IES Solna participated in an international science and engineering competition organised by MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Engineers Without Borders during this academic year.

The competition is an annual global event that brings together teams of two to five students from around the world to solve complex STEM problems. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics and encompasses a broad area of study and careers that focus on these disciplines. STEM education emphasises problem-solving, critical thinking and hands-on learning, which prepares students for careers in industries such as engineering, health, computer science and others. The competition has one category for secondary schools and one for upper secondary schools, and IES Solna was represented by one year seven team and one year eight team. The year eight team was awarded first place in Sweden, and one student was the best performing student for the whole of Sweden.





Graduation – a symbolic end to an important part of young people’s lives

Straight-backed and proud, year nine student Hanna Wanegårdh moves the tassel on her dark blue cap from right to left – a symbolic gesture that shows she has now concluded an important chapter in her life and is ready for the next. One by one, her classmates from year nine at IES Staffanstorp get up on stage and perform the same ritual.

Graduation ceremonies are held at all IES schools and is an important part of the special culture of celebrating progress and learning that permeates IES. At IES Staffanstorp, there was great pride when 100 per cent of graduating students qualified for upper secondary school.

The atmosphere is one of anticipation among waiting parents, teachers and relatives in the large, combined gymnasium and auditorium at IES Staffanstorp as the year nine students solemnly march in, dressed in the traditional dark blue caps and gowns. One by one they get up on stage, shake hands with the principal and school leaders and push their cap tassels to the left. Year eight students are also in

the audience, there to see what they can look forward to next year.

The ceremony marks the end of an important era in the students’ young lives: compulsory school. Their tears, hugs and laughter show that it is a moment of anticipation, relief and sadness. It also concludes a day of musical performances, speeches and the awarding of prizes to those students who have worked hardest to improve their results, and those who have demonstrated the greatest proficiency in Swedish, both as a first and second language, in essays.

REWARDING HARD WORK AND PROGRESS

“For IES, the symbolic rituals that characterise graduation from compulsory school are part of our culture, with an emphasis on learning, but above all on progress,” says Truls Katzler, principal of IES Staffanstorp.

“Our primary goal is for every student to achieve their full potential and move on in life with confidence after compulsory school. That’s why we award prizes to the

students who have worked hardest to improve their results during the academic year.

“This year we also had a large number of students who graduated with ‘honours’, i.e. more than 300 points.

This was the first IES Staffanstorps graduation, as the school was inaugurated in 2022, with classes from preschool class to seventh grade. Today, the school has 580 students, with a catchment area stretching from Staffanstorps and Lund to Rosengård in Malmö and Limhamn. It also has 75 employees. Like many of the IES schools, it has an international base of both students and teachers, with some 80 languages being spoken.

“We are extremely proud that 100 per cent of graduating students have qualified for upper secondary school. It’s a testament to the hard work that both students and teachers have put in over these three years,” says Mr Katzler.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

In his 22 years as a school leader in both municipal and independent schools, he has a history of successfully raising the level of student achievements. Before Mr Katzler was appointed principal of IES Staffanstorps, he was principal of IES Hässleholm, where 98.5 per cent of his year nine students qualified for upper secondary school when they graduated. A key success factor, he says, is that IES schools have committed management teams with clear mandates that can share tasks. This means that he himself can be present and visible to both students and staff.

“I am convinced that the best way to lead is by example - and that means being visible. It’s also important to be clear and to make demands, but at the same time to show care and concern, i.e. ‘tough love’ – a term often used by IES founder Barbara Bergström,” he says.

IES STAFFANSTORP

568

students

60%

students recommend the school

52%

students with origins outside Sweden

100%

students qualified for upper secondary school

98%

students achieved the knowledge targets in all subjects

Numbers as per September 2025.

“The teachers at IES have helped shape me as a person”

“The teachers here have given me knowledge and insights that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. They have helped me explore what I am interested in and helped shape me as a person.” So says Hanna Wanegårdh, who graduated from class 9B at IES Staffanstorps in June – and who had the honour of giving a farewell speech at the graduation ceremony.

With more than 300 points, Hanna was named IES Staffanstorps’s valedictorian for 2025. The term is an academic title for the highest performing student in a graduating year at an academic institution primarily in North America. The recipient of this prestigious title is often asked to give a farewell speech at the graduation ceremony.

Hanna says she finds the entire graduation and everything it entails a lot of fun, and says she was very proud to be asked to give a speech.

She delivered a strong, articulate speech. With a steady voice, Hanna paid tribute to the school, which she has

attended since year seven, as well as her teachers at IES Staffanstorps.

“There’s positive energy here at IES and it has spurred me on to work hard and inspired me to perhaps become a teacher in the future,” she says.

“One big difference from my previous school is that there is a greater sense of community here, for example, the division of students into houses helps you to socialise with more people. I also really enjoy the international atmosphere.”

As her next step in life, Hanna has chosen to study the science programme at an upper secondary school in Lund.

“It’s a bit sad to leave this community but it will also be exciting,” she says.

HANNA WANEGÅRDH
GRADUATE FROM CLASS 9B, IES STAFFANSTORP





IES organisation:

A safe working environment makes for enjoyable and successful schools

Internationella Engelska Skolan is strongly driven by its core principles, its ethos, which permeates our culture and guides our organisation. We have clear processes and procedures to ensure that these principles are adhered to. Living up to our ethos also requires us to recruit and develop the best and most engaged employees. Our goal is to create attractive, stimulating working environments in our schools where employees and students are happy and feel safe.

This strong culture is an essential component of IES' success. The most important duty of the organisation's leaders is to inspire people and ensure they uphold the core principles that form the foundation of our culture. That's why IES places great emphasis on recruiting principals – the key leaders of each school – whose role it is to ensure that IES' core values are converted into actions.

Principals have full responsibility for their individual school and staff. It is a principal's duty

to unfailingly foster our students' academic and social development, recruit competent staff and ensure that staff members comply with IES' core values.

They are to recruit teachers who are passionate about their subjects, and who inspire their students. IES principals must also be present throughout the school day, from welcoming students in the morning to being visible in the corridors and the dining hall during the course of the day. In other words, our principals have a clear role with a great deal of responsibility.

85%

of IES teachers have a degree in teaching

The average in Sweden is 68%
Source: Swedish National Agency
for Education

So that new school principals have the best possible start and a chance to live up to the high expectations placed on them, they attend a number of introduction courses during their first few months. These are focused on important matters including student health, labour law, quality, the Education Act and safety. Since IES currently runs 46 compulsory schools and one upper secondary school, and thus has 47 leaders, the principals have a unique opportunity to collaborate and share experiences. Along with the other leaders, and with the same focus and conviction, they are expected to constantly and consistently develop their schools. All new principals are also allocated a mentor who supports them.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

For the past few years, IES has run a leadership programme for future leaders within the organisation. This year, 15 employees participated in the Advanced leadership programme (ALP) and another 25 participated in the School leadership programme (SLP). One of the main purposes of these leadership training courses is to ensure that our leaders feel confident in their roles, even when they take on new and more complex roles. The meetings also give them a chance to build networks to exchange knowledge and experiences. In addition to the leadership programmes, IES offers ongoing training for principals through group discussions, online meetings and dedicated conferences. These aim to keep everyone up-to-date in a field that is constantly changing and evolving, and also to enable everyone to work in accordance with IES' core principles.

Every year, a quality survey is carried out in every IES school to find out how our employees feel about a range of differ-

ent parameters that are crucial to effective school operations. In addition to this we carry out a workplace environment survey. This focuses on the organisational and social workplace environment and areas such as leadership, clarity and sustainability work are evaluated over time. The results of these surveys are subsequently communicated to the schools, and action plans for the year are created. The objective is to share knowledge, inspire and create best practices.

AN ATTRACTIVE AND SAFE PLACE TO WORK

IES works actively to be an attractive employer, a place where competitive employment terms, a clear salary policy and a good working environment are a given. During this year, a new HR and payroll system was implemented to ensure that employment and payroll management is carried out efficiently and securely for employees. IES regularly analyses employee salaries to ensure that there is no unjustified unequal pay between women and men. In 2024/2025, salaries for IES teachers were equivalent to, or in some cases exceeded, the national average in all age categories.

Providing a safe and stimulating working environment is of vital importance in attracting competent and engaged employees to our schools. A good working environment for teachers requires clarity in how things are done so that everybody works according to the same principles, inside and outside the classroom. It also means ensuring that teachers never feel alone in their professional role, which can sometimes be a vulnerable position. In the past academic year, an incident reporting system was implemented to enable early detection of threats and violence against employees. Each school also has a safety representative. Training for safety representatives is conducted three to four times a year. ►



"When my daughter and I left South Africa where I had worked as a teacher for many years, we first settled in Germany where we have family. When I saw that IES was looking for teachers, we decided to move to Sweden. We arrived at IES Falun in the middle of the freezing-cold winter, which was a bit of a shock, but we soon started to enjoy it here and after a few years Kristin also decided to train to become a teacher.

"We now both work at IES Staffanstorp and are really happy both at the school and in Skåne. It feels like home, and this is where we want to stay. The main difference between the school here and those in South Africa, is that students are treated as individuals here and there is mutual respect between students and teachers. We build a relationship with our students – which makes them more devoted to their studies."

MARINA GOETZE, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL F-5 AND SCHOOL-AGE EDUCARE (FRITIDS), AND HER DAUGHTER **KRISTIN GOETZE**, YEAR 7B MENTOR AND TEXTILE CRAFTS TEACHER, IES STAFFANSTORP

IES works with a partner for preventive and rehabilitative healthcare and offers employees a support hotline that is available 24/7. To promote transparency and responsible behaviour, IES uses a whistleblower function provided by an independent third party. IES strives for the highest possible level of transparency, honesty and accountability within the organisation, and the whistleblower function aims to highlight any irregularities quickly. For a case to be considered whistleblowing in the legal sense, the misconduct must be of public interest, such as human rights violations, corruption, conflicts of interest, misuse of public funds, violations of official regulations, violations of competition rules or generally unethical behaviour.

UNIQUE ORGANISATION

The IES schools also include heads of departments and heads of year to ensure quality in teaching and in the school environment. This type of organisational structure is unique compared with other schools in Sweden. It is also one of the keys to our good academic results and high number of students who qualify for upper secondary school. Every academic year begins with an introductory week when we bring all staff together to ensure commitment to IES' core values and focus on the areas of improvement for the year ahead. For international teachers, the programme also includes the Swedish school system and national curriculum.

IES recruits many talented teachers from other countries and helps them to settle in so that their introduction to Sweden goes as smoothly as possible. For instance, IES gives them information on how Swedish society works and how to find somewhere to live. We also help with arranging visas. Many of our international teachers choose to remain at IES and make Sweden their long-term home. Teachers from other countries are attracted to Sweden by the beautiful nature and secure conditions the country offers, and to IES due to our profile and culture. Recruiting teachers from outside of Sweden is also a way to cope with the teacher shortage in Sweden.

IES' employees mainly come from Sweden and English-speaking countries such as Canada, the US and the UK. 85 per cent of our teachers have a teaching degree, of whom just over half were educated at a Swedish university, and the rest hold a degree in teaching from another country. Across Sweden's compulsory schools as a whole, an average of 68 per cent of teachers have a teaching degree from university. IES encourages teachers from other countries to obtain a Swedish teaching qualification, and enables them to do so, for example through opportunities to study Swedish during working hours. Furthermore, an online course in Swedish is available to employees to help them learn Swedish. We are pleased to see that more and more of our international teachers are engaging in these efforts. //



3 800

IES employees as at September 2024, an increase of 3 per cent compared to September 2023.

2 400

teachers employed as at September 2024, a decrease of 1 per cent compared to September 2023.

790

international teachers employed as at September 2024.

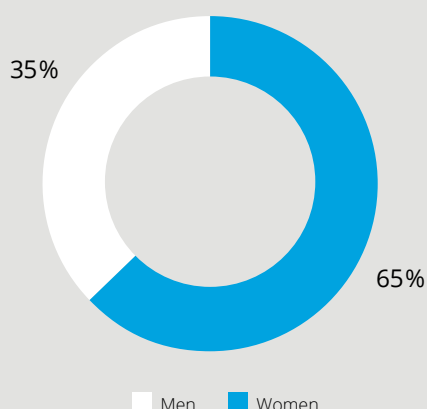
Staff/student ratio



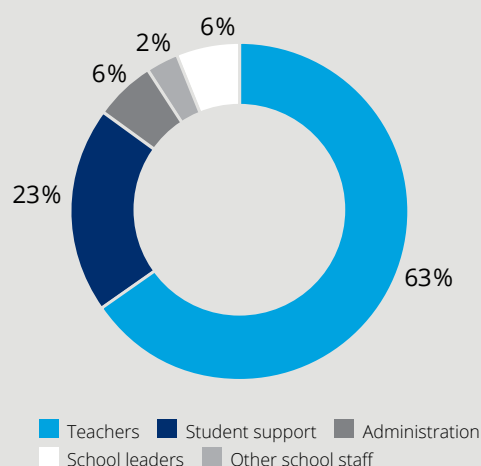
Equal pay index



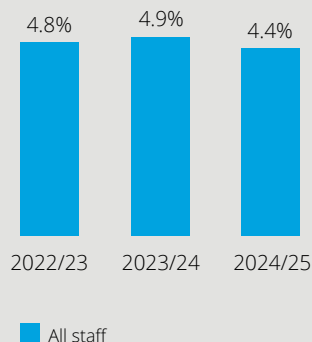
Gender distribution employees



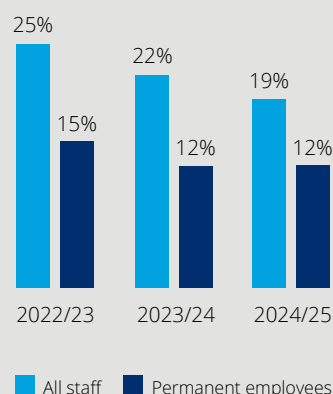
Employees per role



Absenteeism



Staff turnover



Lars Jonsson, CEO:

"Our goal is to constantly improve quality in a changing world"



Society has undergone radical changes since IES was founded over 30 years ago. That's why we constantly improve our operations to continuously deliver high quality. We have not changed our core values, though. We are just as convinced today as we were when IES started, that our students' success

is grounded in excellent English skills, a peaceful classroom environment and in the high expectations we have of every student. As our surveys clearly show, this is the reason why parents and students choose IES.

In response to a social climate which many people feel is unsafe, we have implemented a number of initiatives during the year to improve students' well-being and safety – prerequisites for learning. This has involved raising awareness of how to deal with potentially dangerous situations and ensuring the proper functioning of the infrastructure in our schools. Our schools must be perceived as – and be – safe, secure places for students and staff.

Safety is also about well-being. Nowadays, many children's mental health is being adversely impacted by the rise in digitalisation, from online bullying and appearance anxiety to a sedentary lifestyle and lack of sleep. Not only does this affect the student's mental and physical well-being, it also impacts their perception of school and learning. To counteract the negative effects of too much screen time, IES is increasing the range of physical activities during the school day, not least through the #movewithIES initiative. We also encourage students to read more through our excellent school libraries and the trained staff who work in them.

Our schools are located in different types of socio-economic areas, and the composition of students in some areas can be more challenging than in other schools. To succeed in areas where there may be some insecurity in the child's family and local community, it is even more important to establish a caring school environment with adults who create a feeling of safety. We do our utmost to ensure that every student reaches their full potential, whatever their background.

Our aim is to safeguard the high level of quality that IES schools are known for, and which we constantly endeavour to improve. Our strong school leaders and talented staff are key to our success, they see and acknowledge each individual every day. They respect our students and aspire to provide a school life that equips students with the best possible tools for adulthood.





