



Nordic
International School



Welcome to Nordic International School

Nordic International School was founded with a mission to ensure that students can achieve the best possible academic progress and results, regardless of background.

We offer an evidence-based education, with an emphasis on knowledge, based on the belief that there are no shortcuts to achieve excellence.

Many schools neglect factors that are fundamental to achieving high performance. These include, for example, discipline and teacher-led education. At Nordic International School, such factors are key in our offering.

Our schools therefore link back to an older Swedish school tradition, with a strong emphasis on classroom leadership, where teachers challenge students to deepen their critical thinking.

With best wishes,

Katharina Sjögren-Edström
CEO

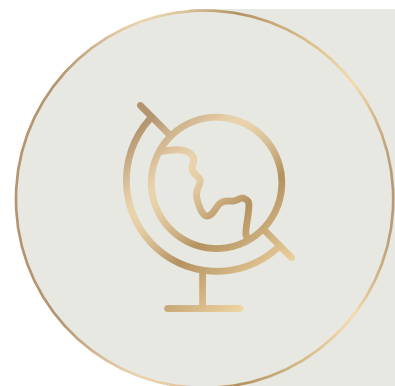
Our educational model

Based on rigorous research on what works to maximise students' academic progress and achievement as well as their development of social-emotional skills, we have developed an educational model with three main features:



Knowledge, academic progress and discipline

- High expectations
- An emphasis on maximising academic performance and progress
- Teacher-led education with clear instructions, interaction, and continuous feedback
- Standardised routines before, during, and after lessons
- Rules of conduct and a robust sanctions policy as well as rewards
- School uniform



An international profile

- Up to half of all instruction among older students is conducted in English
- Encouragement and support to help students express themselves in English, both in the classroom and during breaktime
- International staff
- International elements and traditions, including a 'house system' and celebration of world festivals



Evidence-based practices

- Continuous monitoring of each student's performance and progress
- An international researcher as senior advisor to school management, who evaluates potential changes to the concept prior to adoption
- Clear management structures
- Regular evaluation of teacher performance, with continuous feedback and professional development



Knowledge, academic progress and discipline

At Nordic International School, we put great emphasis on knowledge and important social-emotional skills. In this regard, our educational model is more 'traditional' than the 'progressive' student-led philosophy that has been dominant in Sweden since the 1990s.

Subject knowledge and social-emotional skills are crucial for students to succeed in life. Research suggests that a strong focus on knowledge, teacher-led education, and classroom discipline have positive effects on academic results and behaviour.¹ Therefore, we promote a structured school environment and traditional teaching methods.

In combination with discipline and clear rules of conduct, these methods achieve the best possible results for our students. In the calm and secure environment of our schools, teachers can devote their time to teaching and helping students to deepen their critical thinking.

Clear rules of conduct also create peace of mind for our students, which is an important prerequisite for learning. Our students know what is expected of them, are aware of the consequences if they breach any rules, and know what rewards they can expect if they set a good example.

Our teachers, students and guardians are met with high expectations with regards to their attitudes towards their school, their studies and one another. Both teachers and students are expected to be well prepared, disciplined and contribute to a focused and calm environment in the classroom.

We value regular contact with guardians, and we expect them to work with us to ensure that our students have the support they need to achieve their full potential. ■

An international profile



In an increasingly globalised and digitalised world, the understanding of and respect for different nationalities and cultures are becoming ever more important.

At Nordic International School, we follow the Swedish curriculum, but, in contrast to most other schools, conduct up to 50 percent of instruction in English. We encourage and support our students to express themselves in English, both in the classroom and during breaktime.

Our teachers speak both English and Swedish, and we have a policy that all our schools should have a mix of Swedish and international teachers. Teaching materials and written texts may be either in English or Swedish.

Other essential elements of our international profile come from the British education system, including a 'house system', a dress code for teachers and students, rhetoric training for all students, and yearly activities where we learn about and celebrate festivals of different nationalities and cultures. ■



Ms Madeleine Muller
Teacher in English and Music

» Some believe that you need to be an expert in English to go to our school. The level of English varies among our students when they start at our school. Some have lived in other countries and have already become advanced in their language skills, others have not yet developed as far. What is most important is that you are motivated to study hard and learn.



Evidence-based practices



Students and guardians have high expectations of our ability to maximise each individual student's knowledge and social-emotional skills. At our schools, all teaching must be based on methods supported by rigorous research.

We promote teacher-led instruction, discipline, and other more traditional education features – not for ideological reasons, but because research has proved that such features have positive effects on students' results.

At the same time, we know that research never stands still. New methods and resources are invented and tested continuously. For example, some research suggests that certain technological aids – a contemporary rather than traditional element in education – can have positive effects on academic performance and progress.²

We want to constantly develop and improve. This requires us to stay up-to-date regarding new research and analyses that can help us moving further in a scientific direction.

We always evaluate new methods and resources before we introduce them on a larger scale.

Our professional development programme for teachers is mandatory and aims to support teachers in the application of the right methods in the classroom and to ensure that our practices lead to the best possible progress and performance of our students – today as well as in the future. ■





Quality-assurance process

We have a rigorous quality-assurance process through which we measure and evaluate satisfaction rates among students and guardians on a regular basis.

In an annual survey, students and guardians are asked about their overall experience as well as the classroom environment and our work in upholding core values. Questions are centred around topics such as safety, classroom discipline, and behaviour, as well as students’ and guardians’ overall satisfaction with the school.

The survey results are analysed in relation to the national educational goals, and provide schools with information about what they need

to investigate and analyse further together with students, staff, and, in some cases, guardians in focus groups. The education organiser also advises the schools on what factors they should focus on in their local quality work. Based on analyses carried out at the schools, they then decide goals and interventions and put them in their action plans. To support this process, all principals attend annual workshops to analyse school results and exchange experiences and best practices.

Nordic International School also participates in external quality audits conducted by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, for example through surveys of students and guardians.

Academic achievement

The preliminary average merit ratings in the school year 2021/22 among Nordic schools with year 9 students show that they perform well compared with the municipal averages.

At **Nordic International School Karlstad**, the average merit rating amounted to 248 points, while 95 percent of students were eligible for upper-secondary school studies. This can be compared with the municipal average in 2021, of 235 points and 90 percent respectively.

At **Nordic International School Norrköping**, the average merit rating amounted to 262 points, while 98 percent of students were eligible for upper-secondary school studies. This can be compared with the municipal average in 2021, of 235 points and 87 percent respectively.

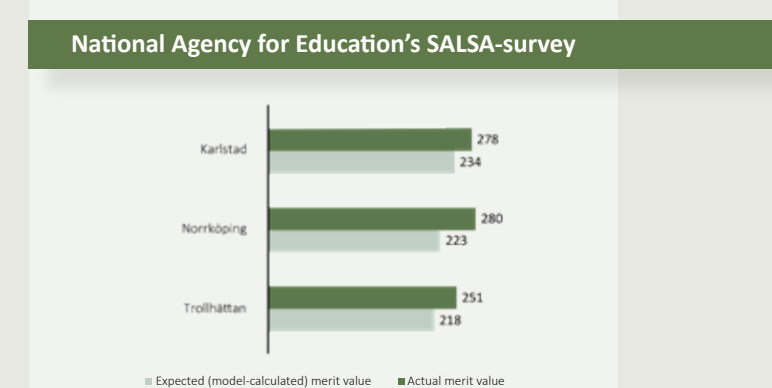
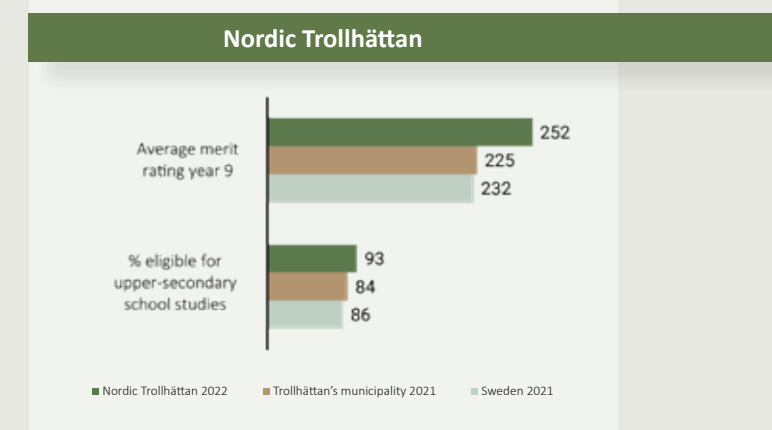
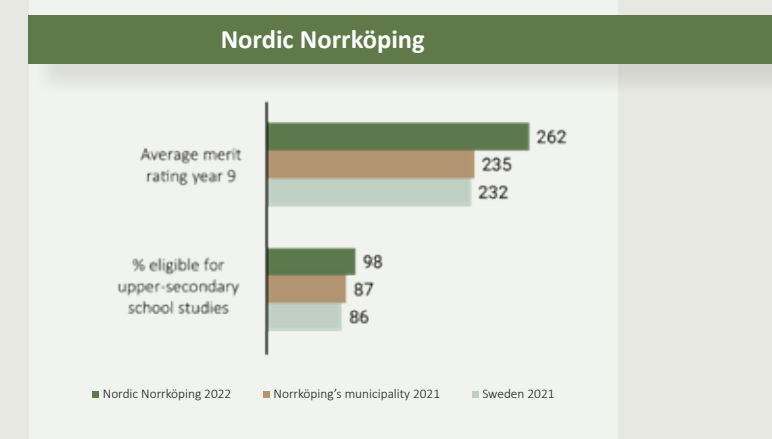
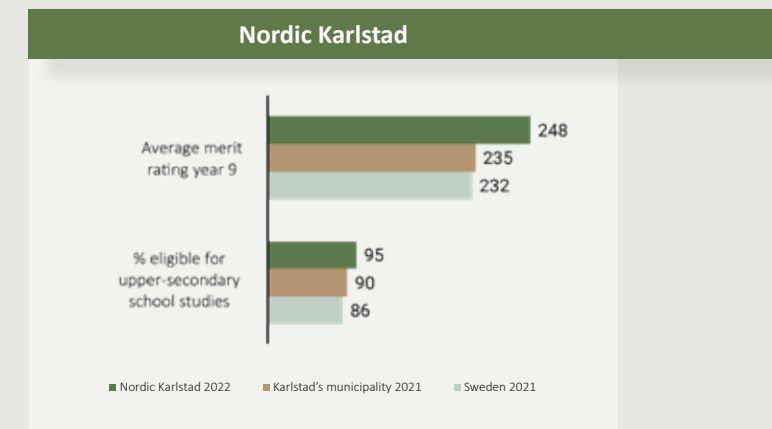
At **Nordic International School Trollhättan**, the average merit rating amounted to 252 points, while 93 percent of students were eligible for upper-secondary school studies. This can be compared with the municipal average in 2021, of 225 points and 84 percent respectively.

In 2021 in Sweden, the average merit rating among year 9 students was 232 points, while 86 percent of students were eligible for upper-secondary school studies.

Our students exceed expectations

Our year 9 students achieve much better results than expected according to the **National Agency for Education’s SALSA-tool**. In SALSA, schools’ average performance is predicted on the basis of three factors: parental education, the share of students who have immigrated recently (and students with no personal identity number), and the share of girls/boys. The difference between the schools’ actual and predicted performances indicate whether they fail to meet or exceed expectations.

The three Nordic schools included in the most recent SALSA survey – Norrköping, Karlstad, and Trollhättan – all perform better than expected given their student composition. This is further testament to our schools’ high standards.■





The role of the teacher

Teachers have a central role at Nordic International School and we carefully select our members of staff. Our teachers are passionate about their profession, with a love of teaching and helping students to learn and acquire relevant social-emotional skills.

Our teachers are expected to have mastered the English language. We strive to have a combination of teachers with a Swedish teaching certificate and teachers with foreign qualifications.


The most important responsibility of a teacher at Nordic International School is to educate students, and their most important role is as a leader in and

outside the classroom. With creativity, dialogue, and feedback, our teachers stimulate students' interest in their subjects, challenge them, and inspire them to want to learn and perform to the best of their abilities.

The teacher also has an important social role as an adult role model with the ability to earn students' respect and trust.


Teachers at Nordic International School are expected to be in regular contact with guardians, who expect continuous feedback about student performance and progress as well as information about potential issues and challenges. ■



 Ms Linda Vejedal
Teacher

» Structure and order play an essential role in our school, as it enables our teachers to focus on instruction.



 Mr Gabriel Gonzalez
Social pedagogue

» For me it is incredibly important that we put students first and ensure individualised instruction. At Nordic International School, every student has the opportunity to learn and develop.



House system for school spirit and student leadership

Academic success is a key goal at Nordic International School, but personal development and school spirit are just as important.

Every student at Nordic International School is a member in one of our houses. A house is composed of a mixed group of students from different year groups. The houses allow students to make friends with fellow students with whom they would normally not interact. The house system promotes school spirit and gives students an opportunity to shine in their different fields of interest.

House Leaders and House Captains

Every house is allocated a House Leader, a member of staff, who bears the overall pastoral care of the house. Their task is to encourage students, help them develop their leadership skills, and ensure good manners.

In the beginning of each school year, the members of a house elect a student in year 9 as their House Captain with a Vice-Captain from year 8.

Each house has its own symbol and motto, and students are encouraged to form the house identity themselves.



A student forum





















The houses have regular meetings where the House Captains get the opportunity to relay information from the Principal and teachers to other students. It is also an opportunity for house members to socialise.

The House Captains have the responsibility to organise house meetings, and to encourage and motivate the other members of the house. It is also their responsibility to help younger students' transition into school.

Normally, a house competition is held once a month. The houses compete in both sporting and academic events. For example, house competitions are held in debate, science, poetry, swimming, and athletics.

Winning a house competition earns points in the house tournament, which stretches over the school year. However, points are not awarded for academic performance. At the end of the school year, all points are added up and the house with the most points are awarded a trophy with the house name engraved on it. ■

OUR HOUSES

 Badger	 Lynx
 Bear	 Moose
 Buffalo	 Otter
 Buzzard	 Owl
 Deer	 Raven
 Eagle	 Squirrel
 Fox	 Viper
 Hare	 Wild Boar
 Hedgehog	 Wolf
 Lizard	 Wolverine



Interior design and dress code

One important aspect of the Nordic International School way of working is that we aim to remove different forms of distractions, in order to ensure that all students are able to succeed in the classroom. This relates to both student and staff clothing as well as the interior design.

To ensure calm and safe spaces, Nordic International Schools are designed in ways that research and experience suggest help improve learning.³ We have carpeted floors and clear walls in the classrooms, to accommodate a disciplined learning environment. Students are supposed to be able to be active during breaktime, both indoors and outdoors, and enjoy the company of their peers. There are also areas designated for calmer activities like reading and academic collaboration.

A dress code that removes distractions

At the beginning of the school year, every new student is given a set of clothes. Students wear their own trousers as well as indoor shoes or socks. Outdoor clothes and shoes are kept in the student lockers or cloakrooms.

The school uniform helps us ensure equality among students by removing the competitive pressures related to clothing. It signals that students are part of a community. It also signals that students are supposed to study when they are in school. The school uniform also helps to decrease visual distractions in the classroom and ensures that students and teachers can focus on the instructional process.



Similarly, all school staff follow a dress code. Teachers should lead by example and through their attire show that they take students' education seriously and that they aim to succeed in their mission.

No mobile phones

Mobile phones are another distraction that has been removed at Nordic International School. At the beginning of each school day, students hand in their phones to the teacher. The phones are returned to them before they leave school for the day. This ensures, among other things, that students communicate and engage with each other during breaktime, rather than focusing their attention on mobile phones. ■

» I like having a school uniform because it means you never have to think about what to wear in the mornings.
- Student



THE SCHOOL UNIFORM*

- Year 4-6
 - 3 light blue polo shirts
 - 2 dark blue zip cardigans
- Year 7-9
 - 3 light blue polo shirts
 - 2 dark blue V-neck cardigans
- At the beginning of the school year, students are given a new set of clothes (5 pieces) free of charge, to ensure they can abide by the dress code.
- Guardians can buy more school clothes at cost via a webshop.

**) Applicable for the school year 2022/23. There may be alterations in the coming years.*

Expectations and rules of conduct

Nordic International School is characterised by high expectations and a safe study environment, with a focus on knowledge and academic progress, where everyone is given the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. We have clear rules of conduct, which everyone in the school is expected to respect and help to maintain. Prior to a student being enrolled at Nordic International School, the school, together with the guardian and student, carefully go through the rules of conduct so that everyone has a common understanding. The same applies when a new teacher starts working at the school.

1. The school is a workplace

We shall all contribute to making the school a calm, quiet, and effective environment for studies and learning. All students have the same right to achieve their full potential in a stimulating study environment.

2. Show consideration

Students and staff must treat each other with respect and understanding. We support each other and show respect for our differences. We always offer to help each other, both in relation to schoolwork and in social situations.

3. Zero tolerance to bullying

Bullying or disrespectful behaviour is never accepted. We have guidelines for how we view and handle bullying. We also consider non-intervention to be equivalent to bullying.

4. Physical school environment

Our rules of conduct also include respecting the school's physical environment. We must all take good care of our premises, our furniture, and all materials. We clean up after we have finished our work, and we keep books and other material in specific places.

5. School uniform

The school uniform contributes to our school identity and reduces the pressure on students to have the 'right' or expensive clothing. The school provides, free of charge, the common elements of students' attire. We also have a dress code for school staff.

6. Rewards and encouragement

Rewards and encouragement are important elements in our ambition to motivate students and build a culture that promotes discipline and hard work. Rewards and encouragement should also include other desirable behaviour, such as effort, endurance, manners, good companionship, and other social-emotional skills. Our system of rewards and encouragement includes, among other things, commendations awarded by the principal to individual students, scholarships, end-of-term/year awards, as well as 'house points'.

7. Consequences

In order to achieve a calm and safe school environment, the school has a system of consequences for when the school's rules of conduct are breached. Before a student starts at Nordic International School, we go through the different levels of consequences with both students and guardians. With clear rules and a common system of consequences, everyone at the school is well aware of what applies and the adults at the school have a common approach when someone breaks the school's rules. Consequences are given to students when their behavior hinders their own or someone else's learning, or if someone shows a lack of respect for other individuals or for the school. ■



Do you want your child to join Nordic International School?

Please see the next page for more information about our application process.





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Application

To register your child in our queue, please visit our webpage www.nordicinternational.se.

Admission

Admission to our schools is based on queue time, sibling priority, and a quota for newly-arrived immigrants*. Sibling priority applies from a school's second year of operation. The admissions process begins at the start of the spring semester and offers are sent by e-mail.

School fees

All our schools are free of charge and funded by the Swedish school voucher system. The school uniforms are supplied by the school free of charge.

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Footnotes

1. Angrist et al. (2013), Clark et al. (2012), Dobbie and Fryer (2015), Dynarski et al. (2018), Lavy (2015), and Stockard et al. (2018).
2. Escueta et al. (2017).
3. Fisher et al. (2014).

*) Exception given for the academic year 2022/23, which may be extended.