

**ALTERNATIVE
EDUCATION
ASSESSMENT &
REGISTRATION**

Section 14 Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

**Assessment of Education
in places other than Recognised Schools**

**Independent School
Review Assessment Report**

Name of School

Nord Anglia International School Dublin

Address

Building 2 South County Business Park, Leopardstown,
Dublin 18, D18 T672.

Name of Principal/Director

Mr. Barnaby Sandow

Name of Assessor/s

Lisa Duffy
Jane Merriman

Date of Assessment

3rd December 2024

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Section 1 Background Information

1.1. School Hours

Opening Time:	08:00		
Closing time:	16:30		
Main breaks during the day:	10:20	to	10:45
	11:20 Or 13:05	To	12:20
		To	13:50

Is school in operation for more than five years?

Yes	
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If no, please give date on which school commenced operation

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1.2. Name(s) of principal and/or other teacher(s) interviewed

(Normally interview should take place with the principal)

Mr. Barnaby Sandow (Principal)
The Head of Primary
An Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator
The Director of Admissions and Marketing

1.3. Sources of evidence on which report is based

This assessment report is based on the following sources of evidence:

- Information furnished in form R2 completed by the principal;
- An interview with the Principal, Head of Primary, Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator and Director of Admissions and Marketing;
- Classroom visits;
- Observation of a sample of learning tasks completed by the pupils;
- Observation of the educational materials in use;
- Review of the school's website www.nordangliaeducation.com/nais-dublin;
- Review of the school's handbook;
- Relevant School documentation as referenced in the report and including:
 - School Calendar
 - Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Fire Safety Policy

Section 2 General Information and School Context

Nord Anglia International School (NAIS) is an independent, fee-paying school which is fully accredited to deliver the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP), the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP). Nord Anglia International School (NAIS) is a culturally diverse school, the early years, primary and post primary provisions combined cater for pupils from 3 to 18 years, from both the local and international community. Currently, there are almost 50 nationalities represented in the school. It is located on a six-acre site in South County Business Park. The school is owned and managed by Nord Anglia Education. It opened its doors in September 2018, and the first cohort graduated from the school in June 2022. For the purposes of registration, 508 pupils aged from 6 to 16 years of age are enrolled in the primary and post primary school. The school operates a low pupil teacher ratio, offering pupils an average class size of 22 pupils. Enrolment levels are steadily increasing. The total capacity of the school is approximately 800 pupils.

The focus of this report is NAIS-primary, where all teaching and learning are guided by the IB PYP. The key concepts of form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility and reflection form the cornerstone on which the education provision is based, progressed and assessed. Inquiry based learning, which emphasises the pupil's role in the learning process, is integrated across all learning areas. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and ownership of their learning, with the aim of developing an innate love of learning. Students are challenged to develop and demonstrate the IB Learner Profile attributes to become inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open minded, caring, risk takers, balanced and reflective.

The BELONG framework encapsulates the values of NAIS, and ensures that optimal learning opportunities are provided for each pupil in the school:

B-belong to a global, digital and caring community
E-engage with well-being to confidently prepare for the future
L-learn new perspectives through the IB programme
O-optimise our sustainability and champion service
N-nurture a supportive and interconnected network
G-grow holistically by pushing at our edges

A collaborative approach between home and school is encouraged, enriching the educational experience for all. The school utilises the expertise of the community to enhance the pupils' learning experience. The active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is elected annually and serves as a link between home and school. They welcome and support new families, organise charity fundraisers, attend social gatherings, partake in workshops or collaborate with the school's senior leadership team to help shape pupils' learning experiences. At the time of the assessment, the entrance hallway was attractively decorated for the festive season by the PTA. A drop in coffee shop is available for parents on campus. Open communication between home and school is promoted. Online learning platforms facilitate communication between home and school as well as facilitating parents' involvement in the learning process. Parents are invited to attend events such as open mornings, art exhibitions, student led conferences, end of unit sharing and the PYP exhibition at the end of grade 5, where pupils celebrate and share their recent learning with their parents.

Section 3 The Principal and Staff

Staffing at the school consists of 111 full-time and 9 part-time teachers, as well as 19 full-time and 3 part-time auxiliary staff. Specialist teachers teach music, dance, art, physical education and languages in the primary school. The principal of NAIS, Mr Barnaby Sandow is supported by the head of primary and members of the senior leadership team.

Whole school staff meetings are held on Wednesdays, which facilitate looking at whole school issues. Staff plan and make decisions collaboratively, share resources, ideas and professional knowledge and a culture of openness and collegiality is cultivated within the school. Professional working relationships, based on mutual respect, exist between co-workers. A high rate of staff retention is evident in the school.

Ongoing professional development is supported, encouraged and facilitated at NAIS.

Section 4 Time Devoted to Education

The school day commences at 08:00 and finishes at 16:30. Pupils receive a 25-minute mid-morning break. Lunch breaks are staggered to facilitate the large numbers availing of food in the canteen. After school care (ASC) is available from 15:30 until 18:00 from Monday to Thursday and until 17:00 on Fridays. This service is available to pupils from KG3 to grade 5. Younger students must register for a co-curricular activity from 14:30 until 15:30 should they wish to remain supervised at school after their dismissal time. Co-curricular activities also run from 07:30 until 08:15 and from 15:30 until 16:30 from Monday to Thursday. The school operates for 178 teaching contact days per year.

Section 5 The Learning Environment

NAIS is located in south County Dublin, where students learn in a bright and spacious learning environment. The modern purpose-built school building includes a dedicated art room, an attractive and well displayed library, science and engineering laboratories, a large gymnasium, a music suite with a recording studio, individual music pods, a digital design suite, a black box theatre and dance studio and an early years' centre. Interactive technology is available in every classroom. Planning has been submitted for a theatre to be built on site, and it is hoped that this will be completed in approximately two years.

Classrooms and corridors are spacious, print-rich and welcoming, providing the school with a purposeful, focused learning environment. Artwork, projects and televisions adorn the walls, and each classroom has an abundant supply of educational resources. Attractive and child friendly outdoor playground equipment is available for pupil use.

Section 6 The Educational Activities

6.1. General information

At NAIS-primary all learning experiences are delivered through the IB PYP framework. The IB PYP focuses on the holistic education of students up to 12 years of age and prepares students to be active participants in a lifelong journey of learning. Pupils learn how to learn through the IB units of inquiry, which are **in-depth explorations of a concept. Students explore a central idea, across a broad range of learning areas, drawing on content from cultures** across the globe. Teachers support students by getting to know each student's strengths and then tailoring learning to the needs and learning style of each individual **child. Six units of inquiry are undertaken each academic year.**

The PYP framework is guided by six transdisciplinary themes of global significance which are as follows:

- who we are
- where we are in place and time
- how we express ourselves
- how the world works
- how we organise ourselves
- sharing the planet

These themes mark the starting point for each unit of inquiry. Different perspectives are explored, with pupils using critical and creative thinking to explore ideas from different perspectives. Pupils make connections to their prior knowledge, explore the material, ask questions and share ideas through partaking in learning experiences, which aren't defined by the boundaries of traditional subjects. By learning through inquiry and continual reflection, students develop the skills, knowledge, and conceptual understanding they need to function in an ever-changing society. International mindedness is cultivated as pupils find ways to make a positive impact on the world, both locally and globally. The school's collaborations with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), The Juilliard School and UNICEF also enhance and support children's learning experiences. The curriculum coordinator oversees the transdisciplinary themes, ensuring that key concepts and skills are covered in a balanced manner each academic year.

The school is committed to offering a holistic education, focusing on personal, emotional, and social growth, as well as academic achievements to ensure that each child thrives and flourishes. Each half term a different area of well-being is focused on. The five Perma pillars of well-being are promoted across the whole school. The school is fortunate to have a dedicated pastoral counsellor who can offer student support services or help put robust support in place. Class teachers, as well as the additional educational needs (AEN) team also support pupils.

6.2. Language and literacy skills

The school places importance on all language learning, including mother tongue, host country and other language learning. Through the PYP, the school aims to develop confident communicators who learn to communicate in a variety of ways in more than one language. Primary school pupils can opt to learn Mandarin, French or Spanish. The language of instruction in the school is English. However,

children can still enrol in the school with little or no English. New English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners undergo an initial diagnostic test to assess their proficiency level and determine the level of support needed. EAL classes are then tailored to support pupils in vocabulary acquisition and help improve their ability to speak, write and understand the English language. From Grade 2 onwards additional parent funded lessons are available for pupils if they have not reached a certain standard in English. All teachers are responsible for the language development of students and plan collaboratively to ensure that the needs of pupils are met.

The school implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations. There are four strands within the language framework: Oral language-listening and speaking, visual language-viewing and presenting, written language-reading, and written language-writing. Language and literacy skills are developed through the unit of inquiry. A variety of teaching methods are used to address the diversity of student language needs. Specific skills and strategies are taught explicitly in a developmentally appropriate sequence using quality texts related to the unit of inquiry. Younger children develop their knowledge and understanding of phonics, to aid the development of reading writing and spelling skills.

Oral language skills are developed through the teaching of subject-specific vocabulary, as well as through regular end of unit presentations, which are adapted to suit a variety of different audiences. A lunchtime language exchange is arranged in the school library, affording pupils the opportunity to converse in their mother tongue or another language with their peers.

6.3. Numeracy

The numeracy programme follows the IB PYP scope and sequence. Pupils work in a numeracy rich environment, with practical and hands on resources readily available for pupil use. Students are challenged to think critically and link their numeracy learning to real world problems. Whenever possible, authentic links are made to the unit of inquiry. Pupils engage in learning experiences to explore mathematical concepts and develop an understanding of the five knowledge strands of number, pattern and function, shape and space, measurement and data handling. Resources and schemes of learning from White Rose education are used as a foundation for numeracy learning, combined with end of unit assessments linked to this programme. Map Assessment is also used for screening and measuring achievement and growth from grade 2 upwards.

6.4. Irish

The provision of Irish was discussed at the time of the assessment. The principal confirmed after the assessment that Irish has been offered as a co-curricular activity across the primary school from January 2025.

Children attending an Independent School should be afforded opportunity for the study of Irish, however the study of Irish is not a requirement for registration under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Where Irish is included in the provision, an Independent School may identify students attending that they consider would qualify for an exemption from the study of Irish. Independent Schools can make decisions in consultation with parents regarding arrangements for these children. Any arrangements made in relation to the study of Irish does not entitle students to an exemption from the study of Irish in the event of a subsequent enrolment at a Department of Education recognised school.

Parents of children attending an Independent School should be informed of and acquaint themselves with implications of not taking Irish and/or having a second language. Parents seeking information should consult with the Department of Education www.education.ie and/or the State Examinations Commission www.examinations.ie with regard to the requirement for Irish and/or an additional language.

6.5. Other areas of learning

The learning areas of language, social studies, the arts, science, and physical, social and personal education (PSPE) are explored using the PYP framework, guided by six transdisciplinary themes, through the units of inquiry. The collaboration between NAIS and MIT, and the Juilliard School, ensure that the science, technology, engineering, visual arts and mathematics (STEAM) programme offered in the school is broad, balanced, innovative and relevant in today's ever-changing world.

The use of information technology (IT) is integrated and embedded across all areas of learning, within the IB PYP unit of inquiry. A variety of technology is available including iPads, drones, Spheros, 3D printers and interactive touchscreens. From age 6, pupils have their own devices which are used to acquire the digital skills required to progress in modern society. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online.

Science learning is embedded within the units of inquiry. Students benefit from modern and well-equipped science laboratories, which facilitate experimentation and investigation. The strands of Living Things, Earth and Space, Materials and Matter, Forces and Energy, and Resources and the Environment are covered in the school.

Learning in the arts consists of visual arts, music, drama and dance. Lessons are taught by specialist teachers and are enhanced by NAIS' collaboration with the Juilliard School. Pupils benefit from having access to a theatre, choral room, dance studio, keyboard room and music pods. In visual arts, pupils are exposed to a broad range of experiences including ceramics, costume design, painting, textiles, graphic design and woodwork. In music, pupils engage in activities such as classifying and analysing sound, composing, playing instruments, reading music, singing, performing and listening and responding to music. In dance and drama, pupils engage in creative activities such as movement,

improvisation, mask work, mime, role play, puppetry and scripted drama from different times, cultures and places. Pupils have the opportunity to present their creative work in various forms including during the annual Christmas production or the school musical.

The knowledge content and conceptual understanding of social studies is divided into the strands of Human Systems and Economic Activities, Social Organisation and Culture, Continuity and Change Through Time, Human and Natural Environments, and Resources and the Environment.

Learning in PSPE focuses on the pupils' well-being. Concepts, knowledge, attitudes and skills that contribute to student wellbeing are developed. Pupils are encouraged to have an active and healthy lifestyle, cultivate healthy and positive relationships with others, and learn to understand themselves. Aspects of the *Stay Safe* programme are implemented and the Irish guidelines on teaching relationships and sexuality education are followed in the school.

Specialist physical education teachers and coaches support pupils across the strands of Identity, Active Living and Interactions. Pupils benefit from having access to a myriad of resources and state of the art equipment.

Promoting the student voice is very important in NAIS. The relationship between teachers and students is viewed as a partnership and pupils are actively involved in making decisions about their own learning. Students are encouraged to question, guide and direct their learning, to set their own learning goals, propose and initiate action, and actively reflect on their own learning.

Pupils have the opportunity to learn French, Mandarin or Spanish, taught by specialist teachers, through the Primary Foreign Languages Acquisition programme.

Educational trips and guest speakers enhance and support the education provision and broaden pupils' perspectives.

6.6. Special educational needs

The Addition Educational Needs (AEN) team is led by the AEN coordinator. She is supported by teachers, teaching and learning assistants (TLA), and learning support assistants (LSA). Weekly AEN meetings take place to discuss the needs of the pupils. The school strives to provide an inclusive environment for every child, which caters for the physical, emotional, moral, social and academic development of all its students. Additional support is available for those who are identified as having individual needs, to ensure they have access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum, and that they have equal opportunities to succeed and achieve. The majority of the students can access the school's curriculum through purposeful differentiation of work in class, which is planned for collaboratively by teachers. Personalised learning plans (PLPs) are developed and reviewed with parents of pupils who require more targeted or individualised support or who are liaising with outside agencies. Parents are consulted and informed regularly regarding any special arrangements made for their child's education.

Section 7 Assessment and Record Keeping

The monitoring, measuring and recording of pupils' learning is an integral part of the PYP curriculum. Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to gather information, identify pupils' needs and plan the next stage of their learning. Learning is viewed as a continuous journey and pupils are provided with ongoing feedback on their progress, and advice on the next steps to be taken in their education journey. All pupils are assessed against curriculum standards. From age 7 onwards standardised assessments are used to benchmark pupils' attainment and progress. All data on assessments is recorded on the online *Toddle* portal. Written reports about a pupil's progress are sent home twice yearly, at the end of both the autumn and summer terms. Reports contain information about the pupil's development of the IB learner profile attributes, as well as information on their strengths, progress, and areas where more focus is needed. Parents are also invited to attend parent-teacher conferences twice per academic year. The first parent teacher conference has a pastoral focus, while the second meeting takes the format of a student led conference. During the student led conference, each child shares work they are proud of with their parents and updates them on their progress.

Section 8 Other Relevant Information

Staff have taken part in basic fire safety awareness training. Thirty-four staff members have up to date first aid training. All staff members have been Garda vetted and have been trained in the implementation of Children First. All staff have completed the child safeguarding training. There is an appointed Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL), and details are included in the Child Safeguarding Statement, which is prominently displayed as required. The Principal, Head of Primary and Head of Secondary have completed safer recruitment training.

The Child Safeguarding Statement is compliant under the Children First Act 2015 and all necessary associated procedures are in place as required.

Section 9 Evaluation of the Education Provision and Recommendations

In my opinion, pupils attending NAIS-primary are in receipt of an education, intellectual, physical, moral, and social that meets requirements for Section 14 Registration for pupils attending the school.

The reasons I have formed this opinion of the education provision in the school are as follows:

- The quality of leadership and management offered by the Principal and Head of Primary.
- The information provided by the Principal, Head of Primary, AEN coordinator and the Director of Admissions and Marketing during the assessment supplied a very comprehensive account of the school.
- The range and variety of curricular provision available to the pupils through the implementation of the IB PYP.

- The emphasis on collaborative planning and the development of collaborative practices between staff members.
- The positive partnership which is established between parents, teachers and students.
- The strong communication between home and school.
- The holistic and inclusive approach to education which is evident in the school and is centred around the units of inquiry.
- The support available to those with additional needs.
- The modern, spacious and well-equipped learning environment.

The findings of the assessment were discussed with the participants on the date of the assessment. The participants were advised that the decision regarding registration would be made by Tusla – the Child and Family Agency: Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS).

Following the assessment, a draft report is provided to the principal, along with a Factual Accuracy and Feedback Form, which may be submitted within a specified timeframe, in response to the content of the draft report. The report, along with any information provided on the feedback form for consideration, is brought to the AEARS Registration Panel. The Registration Panel make decisions regarding registration of children in receipt of the education at the Independent School.

Section 10 Discussion of Finding of Report with Principal

The report was discussed with the principal, Mr. Barnaby Sandow, at the conclusion of the visit on 03 December 2024. It was stated that the recommendation would be to register and retain the pupils of NAIS-primary on the register. The final decision regarding registration will be made by the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Panel - Tusla, Child and Family Agency.

Section 11 Outcome

Outcome of Tusla Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service Panel Regarding Requirements for Section 14 Registration of Children Attending the School

Following the Assessment, the Registration Panel decided that children attending Nord Anglia International School will be registered and retained on the register of children receiving an education in a place other than a recognised school as required by Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

Registration is subject to a periodic review by the Child and Family Agency