



Schooling in Denmark





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Education in Denmark is mandatory for children between the age of 6 to 16.

Children can receive education at a public school (Folkeskole) or at a private school – there is a free choice of schools in Denmark. The public schools, including The European School Copenhagen, are free of charge. The private Danish schools charge a monthly fee, usually between DKK 1,250 and DKK 2,500 monthly, but it varies.

The school year runs from August to June. Please be aware that if you arrive in Denmark in the middle of a school year, it is important that you contact the relevant school as soon as possible.

The Danish public school system



School year 0

the year the child turns 6 years old

The pre-school year is compulsory and is the transition from day care to primary school.



School year 1-9

between 7-15 years old

Combines primary and lower secondary education.

Students are evaluated on a regular basis and must complete a number of tests at different stages of their compulsory schooling.



School year 10

optional

Danish children often use the 10th school year to determine what they want to do afterwards. A political agreement from 2025 confirms that the 10th grade will be phased out from the public school system by 2030. However, it will still be possible to attend 10th grade at continuation schools (efterskoler).

General upper secondary school.

Technical and commercial upper secondary school.

Vocational education and training.

Enrolment

In Denmark, you have a free choice of which school you would like your child to attend. As soon as your child has a CPR number ("Central Personal Registration" or personal ID-number), they can be enrolled in schools in Denmark. Please read more about the CPR number on the ISM website.

Public schools

Each municipality has divided all schools in the area into different districts. The municipality assigns a school for your child depending on your address. If you already live in Denmark, you will automatically receive a letter from the school in your district asking you to enroll your child in pre-school. This happens during the year before your child's 6th birthday.

If you arrive in Denmark in the middle of the school year and you would like your child to be enrolled in a public school, please contact your local municipality coordinator. In the municipality of Copenhagen, please contact: ik@buf.kk.dk.

The coordinator will invite you to a meeting concerning your child's needs, language skills, and the upcoming process of enrolling. Some children will go directly to the Danish school system. Others may need to start their public schooling in a reception class. The aim of the reception class is to introduce the child to the Danish language and the Danish school system.

Enrolment in another school

If you would like your child to be enrolled in a different school than your district school, your child will be able to attend the school you have chosen, only if there is no waiting list. As soon as you have decided upon a school for your child, it is advised to contact the school in question regarding enrolment. Please note that many private schools in and around Copenhagen have waiting lists.

A photograph of three children, two girls and one boy, standing outdoors in front of a brick building with large windows. They are all smiling and wearing school uniforms. The girl on the left is wearing a pink and white striped shirt. The boy in the middle is wearing a brown sweater with a red collar. The girl on the right is wearing a blue denim jacket over a white shirt. A green circular graphic with the word 'Tip' is overlaid on the image.

Tip

Be aware that the municipality in which you are going to reside will automatically assign a school for your child, unless you have chosen a specific school. It is a good idea to visit the school you are considering for your child before you enrol him/her, and preferably before you move to Denmark. Please contact the school in advance, ISM will be happy to help you.



Transportation

Many children cycle alone to and from school, mostly from the age of 10. However, children aged 6 and above are allowed to ride a bicycle alone in Denmark according to Danish law. Please check with your school for guidance.

Before and after school hours

If your child is between 6 and 9 years of age, they can be looked after in a school care centre (fritidshjem or SFO – skolefritidsordning) before and after school hours. A monthly fee is charged for this service.

Children above the age of 10 usually attend a nearby club after school, which is organised according to age groups. Please check the possibilities in your local municipality.

Children with special needs

For children with special needs there are different options for special education and other special needs assistance. The special education can take place either in the ordinary classroom or in a special education class, depending on the situation. If your child attends a private school, you will be charged an extra fee if special education is needed.

Food

The lunch break is usually around half an hour, where many children eat their packed lunch. Most schools also offer milk and catering food to which there is an extra fee.

International schools

There are many different types of international schools in the Copenhagen area.

These school systems encompass:

- Cambridge
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- The European School (the only public international school in the Copenhagen area)
- Bi-lingual schools
- International Primary Curriculum (IPC)
- Sankt Petri Schule – German language school
- Lycée Français Prins Henrik – French language school

Most classes in international schools are taught in English. It is a requirement to teach the students a minimum of two hours of Danish per week, but many schools teach more.

The school fee ranges from no costs at the European School Copenhagen to up to DKK 177,000 per annum at the Copenhagen International School. It is possible for some researchers employed at the University of Copenhagen to apply for a grant offered by the Novo Nordic Foundation. The grant covers the school fees for Copenhagen International School for up to five years. Please contact ISM for more information.

Important: If children are registered with a CPR number and enrolled before 5th September, the school fee for private schools is reduced. A public subsidy is paid to the schools according to the number of students that have signed up at the beginning of the school year.

Please contact ISM if you have any questions about schooling in Denmark.

Holidays



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