Reviewer's report

Title: Health promotion in primary and secondary schools in Denmark: Time trends and associations with schools' and students' characteristics

Version: 2 Date: 8 November 2014

Reviewer: Oddrun Samdal

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
The article presents interesting data. The quality of the paper would be substantially improved by including a background for why the research questions are of importance and why and how it is expected that school profiles will vary by school and student characteristics, e.g. ethnicity and school size.

In its current version it is for example not easy to understand why teachers’ sick-leave is addressed nor students’ truancy. Further, the school characteristics addressing social capital are also hard to interpret the relevance of. The paper will benefit from a more narrow focus of analyses where each component included is argued for, i.e. why and how is it expected that the component will contribute to the understanding of the relationship between school health promotion activities and student behaviour.

Further, a more comprehensive literature review is needed as more studies addressing the relationships between school characteristics (including policy and physical/structural components) and student level health behaviour exist.

Finally, more critical reflections as to why no relationship was observed between school characteristics and student level behaviours are needed. Among them a more critical analysis of the measures employed as they are fairly generic and diverse.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests