

Daewon Foreign Language High School

Seoul, South Korea



Korea's pioneering foreign-language school, pairing five-language immersion tracks with a Global Leadership Program aimed at Ivy League admissions.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	71/100
Academic outcomes	78/100
University placement	77/100
Prestige & heritage	80/100
Alumni network	62/100
Facilities	58/100
Transparency	42/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Daewon Foreign Language High School occupies a distinct niche in Seoul: a private, academically selective day school for ages **15–18** built around foreign-language specialisation rather than a generic college-prep model. Its claim on any shortlist rests on focus. This is not a broad church comprehensive with a few strong language classes bolted on. It is a school for students who want an education shaped by linguistic intensity, academic competition and international ambition. The combination of the Korean National curriculum with English as the language of instruction gives it a sharper profile than many

domestic high schools. For families targeting overseas universities, that matters.

What sets Daewon apart is the sense of **high-pressure ambition** built into the proposition. The school's reputation rests on attracting students who are ready to work hard, thrive in a selective peer group and treat languages as a serious academic discipline, not an extracurricular flourish. The editorial tagline points to five-language immersion tracks and a Global Leadership Program aimed at Ivy League admissions; that signals a school geared towards **prestige-conscious families** and students with **clear international intent**. Parents who want a softer, more pastoral sixth-form experience should look elsewhere. Daewon suits teenagers who enjoy intensity, handle competition well and want to be surrounded by equally driven classmates.

In market terms, Daewon sits at the top end of Seoul's specialist academic school landscape: **status-heavy**, demanding and tightly aligned with upwardly mobile families who value elite university trajectories. Its day-school format will suit households already based in Seoul; it offers no boarding fallback for international families arriving without local support. The strongest fit is a student who is already academically strong by ***15***, can cope with a fast pace through ***18***, and wants language learning to sit at the centre of school life rather than at the edges. For that child, Daewon offers **serious academic traction**, a **disciplined peer culture** and a clear identity. That clarity is its advantage.

STRENGTHS

- One of Korea's first two foreign language high schools, approved in 1983 and opened in 1984 alongside Daeil FLHS, giving it a long institutional track record.
- Small-scale teaching environment with an average class size of around 25 students and a student-to-teacher ratio of roughly 14:1.
- Students choose a specialised foreign-language major from Chinese, French, Japanese, Spanish or German, alongside mandatory Korean and English study.
- Notable alumni include Samsung Group heiress Lee Boo-jin and professional golfer Ryu So-yeon, reflecting a longstanding presence among Korea's elite networks.
- 2011 admissions reform removed the English listening exam and barred use of outside test scores or extracurricular records, shifting toward a more holistic middle-school-record-based process.

TRADE-OFFS

- Since a 2010 government mandate, the school may only accept applicants residing within Seoul, closing the door to relocating families based elsewhere in Korea.
- Primary language of instruction is Korean, which can be a significant barrier for expat children without strong Korean fluency.
- As a specialised foreign-language school, the curriculum's core strength lies in languages and humanities rather than broad STEM depth.
- Admission is highly competitive by nature of Korea's foreign language high school system, and reported annual tuition of around \$5,000 sits on top of the common expectation of extensive private after-school (hagwon) preparation.

ADMISSIONS

Daewon is a Special Purpose High School restricted since 2010 to applicants resident in Seoul. Since a 2011 reform, the entrance process no longer uses an English listening test or outside standardized scores; selection instead draws on middle-school records and a portion of places (around 20%) reserved under a social-integration quota. Entry is widely regarded as highly competitive, consistent with Korea's broader foreign language high school tier, though exact current acceptance rates are not publicly disclosed by the school.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_1eb692a9bd.