

The Edinburgh Academy

Edinburgh, United Kingdom



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RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	71/100
Academic outcomes	73/100
University placement	71/100
Prestige & heritage	73/100
Alumni network	72/100
Facilities	73/100
Transparency	66/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

The Edinburgh Academy trades on two things that still carry weight in Edinburgh: age and continuity. Founded in ****1824**** with Sir Walter Scott’s blessing, it has the sort of institutional confidence that younger schools spend decades trying to manufacture, and it still plays rugby’s oldest continuous school fixture. That matters because EA is not built around novelty. It is a **deep-rooted**, **tradition-conscious** British day school in Edinburgh, non-religious, English-medium, and serving pupils aged ****13-18**** in its senior phase. Parents who want a school with a settled identity, visible civic history and a strong sense of belonging will find that here; parents chasing educational fashion will not.

What lifts it above mere old-school prestige is breadth. The school's own public architecture gives equal billing to "Learn More than Grades", "Life at EA", "Academic Results", "The Next Step" and a conspicuously extensive co-curricular offer across art and design, design technology, drama and music, alongside sport and career guidance. There is also a developed support structure rather than a token nod to wellbeing: individual support is named at multiple points across the school, as are pupil guidance, equity, diversity and inclusion, and a formal parent partnership. That combination — *serious academics*, organised pastoral systems and a large menu beyond the classroom — puts EA in the market occupied by established, high-expectation independent day schools that want to produce polished, busy, university-bound teenagers rather than exam machines.

The school will suit a pupil who wants structure, pace and participation. This is not the place for a child who wants anonymity or a narrow school day. The calendar is crowded, the co-curricular spine is strong, and the culture reads as *high-engagement* and *full-programme*. Sport matters, music matters, drama matters, and institutional life matters. A self-starting teenager who enjoys being drawn into teams, productions, societies and the rituals of a historic school will thrive. So will families who value a non-religious setting without sacrificing the codes and confidence of the British independent sector. The Edinburgh Academy belongs on a shortlist because it offers something scarce: *genuine heritage* matched with a broad modern school life, not heritage used as a decorative sales line. What it does not publish here, however, are the hard metrics a critical parent will want next — exam outcomes, destination data and any aggregate measures of academic performance. That opacity is the main gap in the case it makes for itself.

STRENGTHS

- One of Scotland's oldest independent schools, established in 1824 with backing from Lord Cockburn and Sir Walter Scott, and now fully co-educational (a transition begun in 2008).
- Notable alumni span literature, science and sport, including Robert Louis Stevenson, James Clerk Maxwell, Nicky Campbell, Magnus Magnusson, Baron Falconer of Thoroton, Mike Blair, and Iain Glen, plus Nobel laureate J. Michael Kosterlitz and nine recipients of the Victoria Cross.
- World-class co-curricular provision in sport, music and visual arts, with a strong rugby and rowing tradition and dedicated art, design technology, drama and music departments.
- Small class sizes and a favourable 10:1 student-teacher ratio support close teaching in the day-school model.
- Sixth-form pupils can mix Scottish Highers and A-Levels, giving flexibility for university entry across UK systems.
- The school publishes an Academic Results page and careers guidance on its own website.

TRADE-OFFS

- Fees are substantial for a day school, with day fees per term ranging from £3,238 to £6,166 (excl VAT), before extras, lunches and the now-standard VAT charge on UK independent school fees.
- It is a day school, so relocating families must secure local housing within commuting distance of Edinburgh rather than relying on the school for accommodation.
- The school operates across two sites, with the Senior School on Henderson Row and the Junior School on Arboretum Road, meaning families with children of different ages face two drop-off points.
- Its editorial ranking (536, challenger tier) places it below the handful of UK schools with the highest global name-recognition, reflecting a solid regional reputation rather than an elite international profile.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points run from Nursery (age 2) through Junior School, Senior School and Sixth Form, with the Junior School on Arboretum Road and Senior School on Henderson Row. Applications require a registration form and a non-refundable fee, followed by assessment or interview depending on year group; a further joining fee is payable on acceptance. As an established Edinburgh day school competing with several other academically strong independents in the city, places are moderately competitive rather than hyper-selective, with popular entry years (P1, S1 and Sixth Form) typically tighter. Academic, art, music and sport scholarships plus bursaries are available.

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_2a975df155.