

Le Hong Phong High School for the Gifted

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Born in 1927 as Petrus Ky, this Saigon academy now out-medals every rival school at Vietnam's national science olympiads.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	68/100
Academic outcomes	85/100
University placement	74/100
Prestige & heritage	87/100
Alumni network	11/100
Facilities	55/100
Transparency	55/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Le Hong Phong High School for the Gifted occupies a rare position in Vietnam’s education market: a state selective school with the academic prestige of a national institution. Founded in **1927** as Petrus Ky, it carries historical weight, but history is not the main draw. Results are. This is the Ho Chi Minh City school that dominates the national science olympiads and feeds the country’s top universities. For families who care about intellectual competition, subject depth and a cohort that treats study as serious work, Le Hong Phong belongs on the shortlist. It offers a *forensic academic culture*, *hard-edged ambition* and *real scholarly pressure* that few schools can match.

What sets it apart is concentration of talent. This is not a broad “all-rounder” school selling a lifestyle. It is a gifted school for ages **15–18**, and that focus matters. The Vietnamese curriculum gives it a clear national frame; instruction in Vietnamese and English adds practical range, but this is not an international school in ethos or design. Parents looking for small classes, pastoral hand-holding or a cushioned route through adolescence are shopping in the wrong market. Le Hong Phong trades in *intellectual intensity*, *competitive momentum* and *earned status*. The upside is obvious: able students work among peers who raise the floor and the ceiling at the same time.

The right student for Le Hong Phong is academically fast, self-disciplined and unromantic about workload. A teenager who enjoys mathematics, sciences, literature or languages at a high level, and who wants external benchmarks rather than warm encouragement, will thrive here. A student who needs constant reassurance or who wants school organised around sport, campus life or a polished international brand will not. This is a day school, secular, urban and serious. Its appeal lies in *prestige with substance* and a *meritocratic edge* that ambitious local families understand immediately.

In market terms, Le Hong Phong sits above most mainstream Vietnamese schools on academic selectivity and below international schools on cosmopolitan breadth, facilities branding and fee-led positioning. That is its strength. It offers *elite public-school credibility* without the imported identity of an international campus. For the right family, the question is not whether it feels exclusive enough; the question is whether the student wants to live at the pace set by one of the country’s most exacting academic environments.

STRENGTHS	TRADE-OFFS
• One of Vietnam's oldest selective public schools, founded in 1927 (originally as Petrus Ky High School), with nearly a century of continuous operation in Ho Chi Minh City. • Ranked first nationally in Vietnam's 2025-2026 National Excellent Student Competition, with 153 award-winning students, the highest tally of any school in the country. • Near-100% pass rate on the national baccalaureate examination, with over 90% of graduates gaining entrance to university, according to school and third-party profiles. • Offers 12 distinct specialized ('chuyen') subject tracks, spanning mathematics, sciences, literature, history and foreign languages including English, French, Chinese and Japanese. • Runs a bilingual Vietnamese-French program with its own dedicated admissions panel, giving students an additional language-immersion pathway.	• Instruction and entrance examinations are conducted in Vietnamese (Literature, Maths, English plus a specialized subject), making the school impractical for expat children without strong Vietnamese literacy. • Admission is decided by a single high-stakes standardized exam rather than rolling or holistic application; in 2025 about 3,926 candidates competed for 805 places, a ratio of roughly 1:4.9. • Eligibility is generally tied to having completed lower-secondary schooling within Ho Chi Minh City's public system, which can effectively exclude recently arrived international families. • As a public 'chuyen' (gifted) school, the model is heavily exam- and competition-oriented, with less public information available on broader extracurricular, pastoral or arts programming compared with private international schools.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is via a competitive Grade 10 entrance exam testing Literature, Mathematics, English, and a chosen specialized subject; a separate panel handles the bilingual Vietnamese-French stream. In 2025, about 3,926 candidates competed for 805 places, a ratio near 1:4.9, among the toughest of any Ho Chi Minh City specialized school. Eligibility generally requires having completed lower-secondary school within the city's public system, so expatriate applicants without that background face significant, if not prohibitive, obstacles. Occasional supplementary Grade 11 intakes are announced separately.

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_4eedaf9673.